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FADED LEAVES.

BY A. C.

The hills are bright with maples yet;
But down the level land
The beech leaves rustle in the wind
As dry and brown as sand.

The clouds in bars of rusty red
Along the hill tops glow,
And in the still sharp air the frost
Is like a dream of snow.

The berries of the briar-rose
Have lost their rounded pride,
The bitter-sweet chrysanthemums
Are drooping heavy-eyed.

The cricket grows more friendly now,
The dormouse sly and wise
Hiding away in the disgrace
Of nature from men's eyes.

The pigeons in black, wavering lines,
Are swinging tow'rd the sun;
And all the wide and withered fields
Proclaim the Summer done.

His store of nuts and acorns now
The squirrel hastes to gain,
And sets his house in order for
The Winter's dreary reign.

'Tis time to light the evening fire
To read good books, to sing
The low and lovely songs that breathe
Of the eternal Spring.

The Lights of Rockby.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE LOVE OF LANCELEE," "LOVE'S DEVOTION," "FOR MONEY'S SAKE," "STRANGERS STILL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.—[CONTINUED.]

"NO more lonely, silent evening hours," said Lottie, softly; "my music shall talk to me as people never can, always in sympathy with my moods, always quick to cheer or soothe; now, I believe I can be happy."

After this, Lottie spent many hours beautifying her retreat with flowers, which she had coaxed to grow, and the tasteful display of much pretty fancy-work at which her quick taper fingers were always very busy.

Large snowy anti-macassars covered the stiff-backed chairs, and her busy brain quickly planned how to hide the faded front of the piano with the same work.

Nothing seemed wanting in the room but drapery to the long bare window; this was provided by the servant, who took down some really handsome, classical-looking hangings from a disused room for the purpose.

Then Lottie got down her few school-treasures, prettily-bound books, tasteful boxes, piles of neatly-covered music, a portfolio of drawings, and an album.

Then, dusty and tired, she discovered a rent in the square of Turkey carpet, and knelt down to remedy this misfortune, singing over her work.

She was interrupted by her cousin, who put his head into the door to say that his father desired her to write some letters for him.

Lottie lifted her dirty face in supreme good humor, and invited him into her parlor.

He looked round in amazement, wondering what witchery had been at work to so transform the apartment.

That evening Lottie sat in her room and wakened the echoes of the quiet home by the music of her fresh sweet voice singing song after song, till the servants who comprised the little household left their work to listen to the rich full tone, and her uncle said, softly—

"Open the door, Prince; what a splendid voice the girl has, full and throbbing as a soaring lark. Ah! lad; it recalls your mother to hear again the music of a woman's voice in this unlucky house."

"What an awful night," said Lottie, as a couple of hours later she stood by her uncle's side in the observatory. "How the sky scowls, and what whispered threats the winds speak; let us draw the curtains, uncle, and play at cards; I am sure we shall have a dreadful storm soon, and you know how that worries you. See how the sea 'shows its teeth,' as the fisher-folk say."

Then in a full rich tone she sang a line of

"The troubled sea ran mountains high."

"I wish Prince would come home," said the old man, with a little shudder.

"But he is always out rough nights, you know, uncle."

"How do you know that girl?" asked he, turning fiercely upon her.

"I only know what Maggie had said."

"Maggie is a chattering fool, a meddling magpie. Do not encourage her gossip; Prince is all that is good and honest."

"No one said otherwise, uncle; I am very sorry I have vexed you; forgive me, and come to your old seat by the fire. Shall I mix you some grog, and light your pipe? That is right now; I know you are pleased again. Tell me something about the stars; next to seeing them it is good to hear about them."

The girl settled herself like a pretty brown bird at his feet, and drew the old man on to talk of his studies so that he should not notice the distant warning of the winds.

Just as the storm burst, Prince came in with the first full drops glittering on his face.

"Thank God you are returned, Prince," said his father, huskily. "Were the red lights showing when you passed, eh, lad?"

"Yes sir, like a crimson flower."

"That is good: come lad, fill your pipe, and the lassie here will light it and mix some grog, won't you Lottie?"

"Certainly, sir, if you wish it."

And Lottie complied, puffing away at the pipe till it glowed with a pleasant aroma; then she passed it gravely to her cousin, with no sign of coquetry, though she had made the most fetching picture imaginable with the glow of the pipe lighting up her brown face and crimsoned cheeks.

She mixed her cousin some brandy and water, and passed it to him silently.

After this she collected her work together and said "good-night," passing into her little room instead of going, as usual, straight to bed.

She wanted to put her work into its proper place, and, after doing so, she sat down by the window in the dark to watch the storm, which lit the old garden with a weird unearthly light.

After sitting there for some time, lost in thought, Lottie heard the sound of angry, fierce discussion.

Remembering how ill her uncle had looked that night, Lottie crept out into the hall like one of the night shadows, and passed softly to the door of her uncle's room.

It was unlatched and gave way quietly beneath her hand.

She passed softly into the room, which was all in shadow, save for where behind the large screen the lamp threw a mellow light.

The sound of her own name caused her to pause in her onward way and listen with compressed lips, and with her hands clasped tight across her beating heart. Her uncle, in a raised, excited, tone was saying—

"I tell you, Prince you must marry her. What's against the match? She is neither ill-natured nor ill-looking: in fact, a fine free-hearted spirit with the making of a noble woman in her. When her widowed mother died, leaving her to my guardianship, she left a large sum settled in yearly payments upon me for the child's support. On that money, sparing some to her, we have lived for years. Your aunt was a generous hearted woman who loved you like a son when you were a delicate comely lad, and, out of her love for you, she found it in her heart to promise her girl to you in marriage, so that the entail of this fine old place should, after all, through your wife, revert to you."

"I do not see how the old place can only come to me through her, and I swear I will not marry her. I am your son, and so by law the place must come to me, as well as the farm, though they are worth devilish little. You tell me this to frighten me into marrying that girl."

"That girl will have a large fortune, let me tell you when she is twenty-one, and you will be penniless."

"Bah! I don't believe you, I can't see the reason in all this; and, once for all, I don't intend to marry against my inclination."

"You are a fool, a stubborn fool, and will regret this when I am gone: but to leave this girl out of the question, when do you intend to break with that wicked lot?" Here his voice sank to such an indistinct whisper that Lottie could not catch the name.

"I tell you, lad, they will ruin you. The wrecks just here are becoming notorious. The last storm we had the lights of Rockby were put out, and since then a man has kept watch. See,"—this was said significantly,—"that they are not put out again, or by my soul, though you are my own son I'll disclose all."

"Do I not tell you, father, I am innocent of any plots or plans with those you call my friends?"

"Well, then, where do you spend your evenings, or rather nights?"

"I am not at liberty to tell you. I am no liar, as you well know, sir, and I should have fancied that my father might have found it in his heart to trust me. Will you believe me if I swear it?"

"No, no, lad; if your word is false your oath may not be trusted. Let the matter rest now, I can bear no more from to-night."

A silence fell upon them, during which Lottie could hear her cousin puffing away at his pipe fiercely, and her heart beat so loud she feared it would betray her.

At last, only just in time to save herself from discovery, she found courage to creep off.

Hiding in the shadow of the staircase, she saw her cousin pass up to his room with a darkly brooding face.

Poor Lottie, her heart was very sad just now, and her days were weary, for her uncle was impatient, exacting, and peevish, wearing both to mind and body, and Lottie was but a young girl to whom sunshine and fresh air were very tempting.

The kind old doctor looked on the haggard young face pitifully, as he came day after day to his patients, and suggested to Mr. Rockby that he should have a nurse; but this the old gentleman positively refused to do.

He consented however, to having Maggie part of the day and night, providing she gave her sacred promise not to gossip; so Lottie still had her breezy stroll on the high cliff walk, and, now and then, Prince, touched by her pale looks, took her on the sea for a long delightful row, over shimmering sunlit water, when they were both very quiet, but felt the better for each other's company.

Lottie declared that "nothing rested and refreshed her like a row on the open sea." And surely she had need of rest, poor child for it had fallen to her lot to perform woman's hardest, noblest work.

One fresh bright morning, as Lottie crossed the hall to go to her little sitting-room, there came a knock at the hall-door, and, as Prince was just about to go out with his gun, he opened it.

Lottie's steps were arrested by a voice she well knew, saying—

"Be good enough to give this to Miss Lottie more, with my compliments."

A quick curse leap to Prince's lips, for the visitor was none other than the young coastguard officer.

Without a word, Prince slammed the door in his face.

An ill-tempered kick on the stout door-panel testified to the young fellow's disgust.

Lottie sprang forward, saying to Prince, "You unmannerly boor!" And, with nervous haste, unfastened the door and ran out, the wind lifting her dark hair from her forehead, and inflating her holland skirts, her eyes blazing and her cheeks the hue of a damask rose.

She sped on, and quickly overtook her friend.

He paused, as she reached him, saying, breathlessly—

"Oh! how can I express my annoyance at your reception by my cousin? Tell me what it is you want?"

The young coastguard took her hand, and replied pleasantly—

"Well, the fact is I have missed seeing you for days, and at first thought you must be ill; but I dined with Doctor Sefton last evening—we are distantly connected.—and he mentioned your uncle's illness and your worn looks, saying he believed you were moped to death! As it was not likely you had any new books or music, I took the liberty of bringing you these," pointing to a large untidy parcel as he spoke. Then he continued. "I have a dear old mother who posts me down all the fresh literature, fancying I find this out-of-the-way place dull, as indeed I do: and I have also a sister who sends me new songs and music; so I packed up a parcel for you. But that cub of a cousin of yours did not give me a chance to leave them for you."

The sight of such heaped-up treasures as he offered was too much for Lottie to resist, so she took them with many thanks, and a face which showed the prettiest thanks of all, and, after a warm handshake, ran back to the house, shut herself in her room and sat down on the floor with her treasures strewed about her; she soon lost all count of time in their perusal.

* * * * * * *

"What a troubled beat the sea has to-night! How its huge heart heaves and throbs like one in distress, I feel that it is lashing itself into a rage. Oh! how I dread the long night."

Lottie was waiting by the window in her room, till Maggie should summon her to pour out her uncle's tea.

He had seemed better all day, and Lottie had hoped for a good night's rest; now the storm coming on banished her thoughts of repose.

After she had seen him quietly settled among his pillows, she was about to sit down by the fire when his querulous voice bade her go and sing for him, and leave the doors open so that the melody might reach him.

Lottie complied, and in another moment the quick stirring harmony of the old song, "There's nae luck about the house," came.

"Floated afar on the stillness,
There came a softer lay
As she, alone in the gloaming,
Sang the song of 'Yesterday.'"

Prince, passing the open door, was stayed by the sweet sound, and, looking at her, was struck by the desolate appearance of the lonely figure; so touched was he that he found it in his heart to enter the room, and tell her that the music was pleasant, aye, and even asked her if she knew a compan-

lon song his mother used to sing, called "To-morrow!"

She with a few soft chords, passed on to the song he desired.

At its close Prince was silent, and the room had grown quite dark.

They went into Mr. Rockby's room, blinking at the light which Maggie had just placed behind the shadow of the bed curtains, so that the light should not fall full upon the sick man, who turned his wan face towards Lottie, and thanked her for the pleasure she had afforded him.

Prince sat moodily by his father; then with an abrupt "Good-night!" he was about to leave but his father's imploring voice stayed him on the threshold, as he begged him not to go out that night. Two hasty strides brought him back to his father's side as he said—

"Come, father, don't let us go over the old ground again to-night. I tell you I must go out; I swear I go to do no wrong."

He took the sick man's hand as he spoke; then said softly, so that Lottie could hardly hear him—

"Do you like me so little, sir, that you will send me out wretched?"

"No, no, lad, go out; may God guard you for I cannot."

After his son was gone, the old man lay quiet with a look of great weariness upon his face, a look which stirred Lottie's heart with compassion.

It had been arranged that Maggie should tend the sick man during the night; so, after awhile, seeing he was quite comfortable, Lottie left him, feeling tired out and wretched spirits.

Directly her head was on the pillow she fell fast asleep; and then, after what seemed to her a space of dreamless repose, the dream which had come to her like a warning on her journey from town returned to her with such distinctness that it seemed a vivid reality; so real, so startling, that without an effort of will she awoke, and lay in shuddering dread in her bed, afraid to turn her shrinking eyes upon thewindow to have her fears confirmed.

At last she compelled her eyes to the window.

The wind blew shrill and loud, with now and then a sobbing dying cadence.

White wind-clouds trooped like frightened spirits before the sickly pallor of the moon; and, high on the heights of Rockby, gleamed the ruddy signal lights.

Oh! the exquisite relief, the rapturous gratitude, that it was but a dream! Lottie raised herself on her elbow to "make assurance doubly sure."

Hark to the minute gun at sea!

How dark the room seemed, and how dense the shadow which surrounded it like the visible personification of silence. Then again the shriek of the north wind, and the sound of the raging sea.

God help the poor souls cast upon its pitiless bosom!

She would slip down and cover her head she thought lest she should hear their cries above the storm.

Then she took another look towards the red lights; how clearly they glowed and twinkled, as though gleesome with the sight of the tempest!

Had she gone mad?

Or did her eyes belie their use?

Surely, while she looked, the ruddy lights died out.

Swift as the sound of surprise which shook her lids, she sprang out of bed and eagerly looked at the spot.

Ah! her dream was true; the red lights of Rockby no longer illuminated the cliff-tops!

Quick as she always was, to-night she outsped herself.

It was but the work of a moment to thrust on a pair of slippers, take her ulster with its crimson-lined hood, and, placing a candle in one pocket and a box of matches in another, she quietly went down stairs, and slipped with matchless silence and, haste out into the roaring night.

How the wind tore at her, leaping on her as though ridiculing her puny strength!

Deafened, blinded, borne down and beaten back, still she struggled on, supported by an intense excitement and a feeling of courage which made her shriek to the wind to ease her bursting heart and brain.

On, on she struggled.

Oh! thank God, it is not far now, and the wind lulls as though astounded by her bravery.

The moon leaps from behind a bank of clouds, and shows just ahead, clearly defined against the sky, the signal-box and the steep ladder which leads to it, and far away, fighting with the hills and valleys of the sea for dear life, the doomed ship.

With one pleading "God help me!" Lottie grasped the ladder and was about to ascend, when the wind caught her, stopped her breath and compelled her to rest a second; then while there was a lu'l in the awful uproar, she sprang up the ladder like a lamplighter.

She knew well where she was going, for she had been shown all the machinery of the little crib one sunny morning by her friend the coastguard.

It was but a tiny place, and, as she crawled in at the door, she touched someone huddled up on the floor, and to her horror her hand was covered with some sticky fluid which her heaving heart told her was blood.

Shrinking against the wall of the box, she turned her back to the door and struck a match, and, not daring to look about her, felt for the candle; then, with the greatest despatch, lighted the three red lamps which sent their warning beams across the waves.

She paused a moment with closed eyes to gain courage, and knelt beside the prostrate man on the floor, and by dint of great exertion succeeded in turning him on his back; then rolling up a rug which lay on a stool to form a pillow, she lifted the ghostly head upon it and looked for some means of restoring life.

A carpet bag hung upon a nail; with an exclamation of relief she took it down, remembering now how the young coastguard had informed her that was his cupboard, in which he kept comforts for his long night's vigils which came to his turn at times.

By standing on a chair she managed to get it, and found that it contained a bottle of brandy, cigars, and other matters, also a stemless wineglass.

She managed to pour some down the wounded man's throat.

Then she found by wiping the blood off the face that it was none other than her friend the coastguard, and that the blood was pouring from a fearful wound on the temple; tearing off a strip of calico from the skirt of her night-dress, she managed to bandage the wound, and again tried to restore life to the young man, and this time succeeded, for he opened his eyes in a dazed way and asked somewhat unintelligibly, "What in Heaven's name was the matter with him? And where on earth was he?" Suddenly a thought struck him, and he staggered to his feet, exclaiming in a wild tone—

"I remember now. Good God! the signal lights!"

"They are burning," said Lottie. "Come, control yourself, and tell me, how did it happen?"

Still in the same bewildered way, he said—

"I had just trimmed the lights afresh, for a storm was brewing and a ship was visible when a fearful blow struck me down. I grappled with my assailant, and I fancy he took my marks away with him, for I was mad with pain. I know my ring must have cut his face. Well, he beat me off with something he held in his hand, put out the lights and left. I remember no more, for I suppose I was stunned. But how came you here, out in such a garb, poor child?"

Lottie drew her ulster close about her and told him, to look at the ship.

The storm was abating its fury, and the ship was still upon the sea.

The coastguard wrapped the rug about the brave girl, made her drink some brandy and sit still till she had recovered herself, telling her meanwhile that the coastguard were sending off aid to the ship and that the lifeboat was manned.

What occurred after this Lottie knew not, for she fell forward insensible.

She heard afterwards from Maggie how he had carried her home with her bare feet, for her slippers had fallen off before she had reached the signal-box, and how, after all, the ship had been wrecked,—but no lives lost; and how, after that, a body of coastguards had arrested a gang of fisherfolk, among them Prince, who was discovered in Kataby's house.

Lottie, on hearing this, sat up, saying—

"Bring me my clothes; I must get up at once. Oh! poor, poor uncle."

There was a trial, and Prince, who had been out on bail, surrendered to it.

Nothing could be proved against him, but Rhode Kataby's name suffered severely.

Her father was sentenced to penal servitude, for a fearful array of testimony was brought forward against him, and upon his face was seen the impress of the young coastguard's ring.

Prince was severely reprimanded, and released with a caution, while the other prisoners suffered each some term of imprisonment.

The shame and misery of all this had a very bad effect on Mr. Rockby.

He seemed to collapse beneath the burden of so much anxiety, and Prince appeared more dogged and morose than ever, spending most of his time from home, and, during the short periods when he was there, sitting sullen and silent by his father or cousin.

Lottie was looked upon as quite a heroine for her bravery, and invitations came to her from all quarters; but she was not the sort of girl to be made a lion of by the caprice of the hour, so she declined all the overtures of friendship and stayed by her uncle's side.

He had grown wondrous fond of, and dependent upon, the kind-hearted girl.

One gloomy evening, Lottie, worn out with watching, fell asleep by her uncle's side, and he, noticing how worn and haggard the young face had grown, felt remorseful, believing her devotion to him had been the cause of her altered looks; so, early that night, he insisted upon her retiring; but Lottie had instructions from the doctor to watch her uncle carefully for the next few hours, as he was not so well.

So she humored the old man by pretending to leave at his bidding; but instead of so doing, she sat down behind the curtains and waited for him to go to sleep.

Tears rolled down her cheeks and dropped unheeded on her clasped hands, as she told herself that she was one of the most desolate creatures under the sun.

She did not know how long she had sat thus; perhaps she had fallen asleep, for she was very tired; but the sound of her uncle's voice aroused her.

She was about to spring up and answer him, when her cousin's voice arrested her.

Lottie was at heart an honorable, upright girl, with a real contempt for anything like meanness; but she listened now in self-defence, for she knew that these two men held her fortune and her future in their hands.

"I am glad you are come, Prince for I feel my hold on life loosening, but there is much to tell you before I go; much that will grieve and disappoint you, I fear; nevertheless it must be told."

Prince begged his father to wait and try to gain more composure; then Lottie heard her cousin get the old man some wine, and speak gently and soothingly to him while he drank it; then, with a long-drawn sigh, the old man continued—

"I dare say you have wondered, Prince, that I have lived such a lonely, miserable life, shut out from my fellow men and keeping you from mixing with those in our own station. I shall make all this clear to you now. I hope dear lad, you will try to hear me patiently, and think as kindly as you can of the wrongs I have done. Long years ago I moved in the gay circle of fashion; among my set I found a boon comrade in Cecil Pierpoint, a fine fellow enough for merry meetings, but a cold-hearted, callous rake. He had married a true hearted country girl, and brought her to hold her own among the fastest of the ladies of fashion. He soon wearied of her when the large fortune he had with her had gone to stop the ravages his sprendthrift habits had made in his own. He confessed that he had grown to hate her puritan ways, and so left her to the admiring attention of other men. In vain she pleaded to be allowed to stay at home; but no, his wife must be a leader of fashion, a beauty of beauties; his own glaring gallantries he was too careless to disguise from the sensitive young creature, who rapidly fell in the way of the world, and seemed to be indifferent to his neglect. Well, I was a young man whose heart the world had not then hardened to the exclusion of honor and love, and I learned to love my friend's wife, purely and reverently, mind, boy, and she was deserving of such love. I need hardly say that I concealed my miserable passion, and, did my best to bring about a better understanding between man and wife. Among Kate's many admirers was a great personage who could boast of royal blood and handsome appearance. This man repeatedly insulted Kate by his loathsome attentions. Before me, once, she implored Cecil, on her knees, to protect her from this man's fulsome notice, to guard his own honor as became his manhood. He laughed at her, told her she was prude, and that he should be 'heartily grateful to any man who took the nonsense out of her.' I never shall forget the look she gave him, as he said—

"'Do I understand, sir, that my dishonor would aid to your happiness? That you are desirous of parting with me?"

"'Understand what you like,' replied Cecil. 'I am certainly sick of you.'

"With that she came over to me and said—

"'You were good enough to offer to escort me to Lady Leslie's; I am ready.'

"I would have given all I possessed to kill the blackguard, but for her sake controlled myself, and took her to the ball in question. Well, to cut the matter short she never returned to her husband's base, cruel bondage, but sought a sweet freedom with me. I tell you, lad, she was the purest-hearted woman in the world, but was driven to the sin, if sin it was. Soon after, a letter came to me in Spain, saying that the lady's husband hoped he should never see me again, as he really felt very grateful to me for relieving him from a troublesome dependent, and that for the good of all concerned, he hoped I should not cross his path, as, if so, the custom of society would compel him to resent my kindness,—a heartless, disgraceful epistle, worthy of the man. A year after this he met a rich heiress, and, to clear the path for his marriage with her, procured a divorce. Then, lad, I married your mother."

A momentary silence here ensued, and the old man, with weak accents asked for wine.

With haggard looks the son attended to his wants, then said, in a hoarse, unnatural voice—

"Tell me, sir, how long after this marriage was I born?"

With a beating heart, Lottie listened to hear the reply, which came in a strange, choked voice.

"Oh! my poor lad, you came not after but before."

"Good God! sir, why have you hidden this from me so long?"

"Because I had not the courage to tell you. In order to make up for the wrong, I have done all that lay in my power. I have lived a miserable life since I lost my dear and honored wife, for everything must pass away from you with my life."

"To whom?"

"To your cousin the only living heir. Now you see why I was so anxious that you should marry her. You could take the name you now bear by letters patent, and, by marrying her; keep the matter secret. Her mother and yours arranged that it should be so out of their great love for you; and, now that you know how urgent the matter is, you must let me tell the girl, and prevail upon her to consent to this marriage at once, so that I can meet my dear one without reproach. Oh! how she loved you, lad, and grieved over the wrong that you must bear, for truly, 'the sins of the fathers are visited on their children.' Why do you look so strange, boy? Surely it is not in your heart to embitter my last moments by a refusal?"

All Lottie's heart seemed to go out to her cousin, as she waited breathlessly for his reply, which came all too quickly with a pained miserable gasp.

"Oh! father, father, why did you not tell me all this before? 'Tis too late, I have a wife already. Good God! What have I done? Father, speak to me! By Heaven! I have killed him."

Then quick as thought Lottie was by his side.

He was too frightened at his father's state to notice how quick she had come.

He roused the house, and sent for the doctor, who, on seeing the senseless-stricken patient whispered—

"He will not last till dawn."

After awhile the old man revived sufficiently to motion his son to him, and Prince with stiff dry lips, said in a subdued tone—

"Father, forgive me, she is the last you would have chosen—Rhode Kataby."

With a groan the old man fell back into Lottie's arms, crying out to her imploringly—

"For the love of God, befriend him!" Then, with a groan, he died.

CHAPTER IV.

THE windows, for the first time for a week past, were open to the light and breath of day.

The weary scholar had been borne out from his earthly home for ever, and his only son, with haggard eyes, was looking into the tender, quivering face of his cousin.

They had just come from an interview with the lawyer, whom they had left sorting out his old client's papers.

They stood hand in hand by the window in Lottie's little sitting-room, the bright sea-breeze lifting the dark hair from her forehead, as with a look of intense regret in her dark eyes, she whispered—

"Oh cousin, I am so very grieved for you."

"I know you are, little girl, and I feel that I am bitterly undeserving of your compassion, for I have been a selfish fool; but tell me, Lottie, had it not been for my marriage, would you have consented to do as my dear old dad desired?"

A sudden glow crept into Lottie's cheeks as, drawing her hand from his, she said—

"You have no right to ask me that."

"I am quite aware that I have not; yet, knowing my misery, you will answer me and forgive me too! Is it not so, little girl?"

Lottie covered her face with her quivering hands, as she said, so softly that he had to stoop his head over her to hear—

"It would have made me very happy to have done all in my power to make your future brighter."

"God bless you for those words, child."

As he spoke he took her in his arms, and kissed her tearful face passionately. Lottie withdrew herself from his embrace, the intensity of which disturbed even her childish innocence, saying—

"Now, Prince, sit down sensibly and talk business. I have decided that there is only one way to settle this trouble about the old place which is rightfully yours."

"No, no, child."

"Well, it would have been yours if you had happened to have been born a Frenchman; as the lawyer says. I can take it only on one condition, and that is that you remain here with your wife and not in every way as you would do were the place legally as it is morally, yours. No one need know of this matter but you and I and the lawyer and it is the only happy, reasonable way for all of us."

"But Lottie, that can never be, for you will marry some day, and so give the property to your husband."

"I think not, Prince; but do not talk any more about it now; you must accept matters on my terms, and in case of anything happening to upset our arrangements, well, we must submit to it and cry 'Kismet.' Now I have something to say which I fear will offend you."

Here her voice grew hurried and nervous as she asked, under her breath—

"Were you connected in any way with that wicked man, Kataby? I mean, besides your marriage?"

"As there is a God above me, no, not beyond buying a few bottles of brandy and bundles of cigars. Why do you ask me so cruel a question? You must think very ill of me."

"Well you were always out when anything happened to the lights, and see how you hated that young coast-guardsman."

"Yes, because he dared to make love to my wife, and not the right sort of love either."

"He did not know the sin, you see."

"Of course not; but my temper would not let me take count of that. Besides, the fellow was a Paul Pry, always spying about. It was a part of that old villain Kataby's plan to get me safely secured with his daughter, so that I should be out of the way whilst he carried on his dastardly trade. Blind besotted fool that I was to be made their tool."

His face looked so evil as he spoke that Lottie was quick to change the subject of the discussion, and, she hailed with relief the advent of the grey-haired lawyer, who took up her plea in masterly style, for she had won him to her cousin by her clever, touching way of portraying her lonely friendless condition should her cousin adhere to his resolve of taking his wife abroad and so abandon his place of birth to strangers.

The lawyer showed him how much better it would be for Lottie to have her property under the management of a man bound to her interest by ties of gratitude and blood.

After a while Prince consented, only on not quite such liberal terms as they suggested.

Perhaps the thought of Rhode's disappointment should he not consent, bore down the scale in favor of his cousin's argument.

After the lawyer and Prince had gone, Lottie proposed to brighten up the place for Prince's return.

She thanked God that there was now no longer need for the rigid economy of the last few months, so she made quite a display of wax candles, drew the curtains to shut out the night, but, on second thoughts drew them back again, so that the light might stream out in many-hued cheerfulness upon the barren road to guide Prince back.

Then, as the night had grown chill, she knelt down before the fireplace and coaxed the fire into a blaze, which leapt and sparkled merrily.

Then she sat gazing into the burning glow with yearning eyes which seemed seeking for comfort.

She looked a very forlorn, dismal figure, huddled up on the rug, with all her heavy sombre draperies clinging close to her slim form.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Young Widow.

BY PIPKIN.

"WE have offered John's wife a home!"

Mrs. Hastings spoke in a half-frightened voice, as if she expected a storm of indignation to be immediately poured out upon her devoted head.

Miss Penelope Wetherill, her maiden sister, hovering among the fifties, and sole possessor of fifty thousand dollars, glared upon the meek, blue-eyed relative with a stony stare of amazement that was harder to endure than the most eloquent tirade.

Noah Hastings, meek and blue-eyed likewise, and horribly afraid of offending his sister-in-law, and having her money left "out of the family," said hastily—

"It was simply impossible to avoid it, Penelope.

"John invested her small fortune, as you know, in business, and failed. So the child is left, at twenty-two, absolutely penniless, with two babies to care for. She has not a relative of her own, and she must come here for a time, at least."

"I am sure I think it is very nice," said Pennie, the only daughter of the house, and a namesake of her maiden aunt. "I am sure Daisy and Lily are lovely children, and Helen is just as sweet as she can be."

"Well," said Miss Penelope, stonily, "if you see fit to burden yourselves with a family of paupers, it is none of my business."

"Whose fault is it that they are paupers?" retorted Penelope the younger. "Helen had a good income before John coaxed her to put all of her small fortune in his business, and lost it all for her. I think the least his family can do is to give her a home until Lily can run alone. Think of it. Daisy not three years old, and Lily in arms, and poor Helen has never had to lift her hand to help herself."

"Humph!" snorted Miss Penelope, "if John had not married a fine lady, his widow might have been able to lift her hands for herself."

"We will remember that John is in his grave," said Mrs. Hastings, "and that he loved Helen."

"Well," snapped Miss Penelope, "if there is to be a couple of squalling babies here, I'll go up to brother Roger's for a short visit."

This being Miss Penelope's threat every time the domestic machinery jarred upon her peculiar ideas some twenty times a week, nobody paid very much heed to her.

But faces were more serious when, during the forenoon, she actually packed her trunks, and sent for a conveyance to take them to her brother's residence.

"Noah," she said to herself, "may make a fool of himself, but I'll see that Roger does not do the same thing."

Roger Wetherill was a merchant in the town of H——, and a man who had accumulated money during a long life of thrift and toil.

Forty-two years of age, he was still a handsome man, in full vigor—one who had never allowed the pursuit of wealth to crowd out the cultivation of a mind once refined and vigorous.

He was a bachelor, but his house was one of the handsomest in H——, and his housekeeper had the assistance of a well-trained servant.

Miss Penelope had been engaged to a gentleman, who, dying a few days before the appointed wedding-day, left his fortune to his betrothed wife, upon condition of her remaining single and faithful to his memory.

It may have been this condition that soured and hardened the nature of Miss Wetherill, or it may have been only the natural effect of advancing years.

Certain it is that she was hard and sour, and especially bitter on those who were fools enough to marry.

Pretty Lucy Wetherill, at eighteen, married a farmer, Noah Hastings, two years her senior, and their five sons and one daughter were heirs presumptive to the fortunes of these single relatives.

But Tom, Roger, Noah, William, and finally John, had left the home nest as they attained manhood, had married and settled in other cities, till only Pennie, sweet of face, bright of intellect, and full of girlish vivacity, was left in the old farmhouse, still single, but only nineteen.

Miss Penelope felt by no means safe about her remaining so.

The sons of the house had been all in the habit of coming, with wives and babies, for a summer sojourn at "home," and pretty Helen, the youngest and fairest, had been back in her city home only two weeks, John failed in business and, broken-hearted was seized with fever and died.

She had been a small heiress, an orphan, when John married her, and in some financial trouble, had generously thrown her small fortune into his business and lost it all.

Young, childlike, and without any experience of this world's troubles, she eagerly accepted the haven offered herself and her babes, and entered the farm-house with a hope of rest and comfort.

Surely, John's own people would love her, and her babes, for his sake.

They gave her cordial welcome, and in their own sorrow for their son, gave her the tender sympathy she craved.

Pennie entered heart and soul into all preparations for the comfort of Sister Helen, and elected herself child's nurse at once.

But Noah Hastings and his wife had one holy horror overruling their lives—the fear that Roger and Penelope might leave their money out of the family, or, in plain English, away from Lucy or Lucy's children.

Their invitation to Helen had been extended during one of Miss Penelope's many visits to her friends, in or around H——, and her unexpected return had hurried their announcement of the fact.

It was too late to thrust the widow out of the house, and the well-meaning but timid couple found they had offended the old maid most bitterly.

While she remained offended in a state of majestic sulkiness at her brother's, Helen's life was quiet and as happy as her sorrow-stricken heart permitted.

She helped Pennie in the multitudinous farm duties, took mother-comfort in her little ones, and was an affectionate child to the old people.

But unfortunately for Helen, it was an easy drive from H——to Noah Hasting's farm, and Roger Wetherill's horse and chaise were ever at his sister's service.

It soon became wearisome to sulk without an audience, and curiosity was by no means an unknown sensation in Miss Penelope's bosom.

Little coaxing visits had been made by Lucy and Noah, and finally the spinster graciously consented to come over to the farm and spend a few weeks there.

Helen's manner was quietly respectful, but Helen, city-bred, refined and gentle, had no thought of cringing to the aunt, whose wealth it was so important to keep in the family.

She was heartily willing to give respect to an elderly lady, and affection to her dead husband's aunt, but as for wheedling and coaxing a rich old maid, she was far too high-spirited, with all her gentleness, even to think of it.

By subtle hints she impressed it upon Noah that it was a fearfully heavy burden he had taken upon his shoulders.

The babies would soon be great girls, to be clothed and educated, and Helen herself was a mere helpless fine lady.

To Lucy she talked still more plainly, urging upon her the duty of at least getting the worth of her board out of Helen.

"But, Penelope," the little woman urged "the care of two infants is a great tax upon a woman brought up as Helen has been."

"It is not your fault if she has been brought up to airs and idleness, but it is your duty to make her work now."

"But she does her work. She does a great deal of the cooking, takes care of the bedrooms, and helps in many ways."

"And Pennie and you do her washing."

"But we do not mind, and she never had to wash."

"Time she did have to. Let her do her own at least."

Yielding once, Lucy found new exactions every day, and Helen patiently submitted, while Pennie fumed and Miss Penelope triumphed.

Roger Wetherill, coming over as usual to see his sister, found added pleasantness in the baby charms of Daisy and Lily, and quiet gentleness of John's wife.

He liked to talk to the pretty widow, so modestly unconscious of her own loveliness, and so intelligent in her conversation.

He loved to chat with her of the great city, where he had often been called on business for flying visits, but which was truly home to Helen.

He liked to hear her earnest tribute to John's memory in the tender thrill of her voice in speaking of him, her loving words of his kindness to her in their brief married life.

But at home, Roger Wetherill heard Miss Penelope, in her frequent visits, ever telling of the laziness and fine ladyisms of John's widow.

Every word was a word of hardest blame, and the kind-hearted bachelor often wondered how one so fair and sweet could be so utterly unworthy of respect and affection, as Helen was represented to be.

The weary winter wore away.

Spring came, and then summer.

Lily was trotting about, and Daisy a merry child of four years.

Both little ones were gaining health and strength every day in the pure country air, with the fresh country fare, and if Miss Penelope scolded and snubbed them on every occasion, grandma and Aunt Pennie were always ready to console and pet them.

So they thrived and were happy.

But Helen was paler than the lilies in the garden, drooping visibly, unable to bear the burdens of work that seemed so trifling to those always accustomed to them.

There came a glorious September day, when Mr. Roger Wetherill, having a few hours' leisure, determined to ride over to the farm.

Pennie was a great favorite of her uncle's, and he was never averse to a chat with Helen and romp with the children.

There was no one in the kitchen but Aunt Penelope, who was churning.

It was one of that estimable female's peculiarities to let off all excitement by vigorous churning.

Funerals, weddings, christenings, and family disputes, were all inaugurated and dismissed by the hauling out of the churn from the buttery, and Penelope presiding at the dasher.

Roger Wetherill made a wry face as he recognized the tokens of stormy weather in the swing of Miss Penelope's arm and the switch of her skirts.

"Where are all the folks, Penelope?" inquired her brother.

"I'm here, if I'm anybody," snapped the spinster, "but I don't suppose I am. Nobody counts for anything to this family but begging widows and pauper children. A thankless, ungrateful set, eating a respectable family out of house and home. I can tell you none of my money goes to help support Mrs. John and her young ones."

Down came the dasher to emphasize the last three words, and Roger Wetherill fled from the signs of further expression of wrath.

He strolled down the path, leading to a summer-house, attracted by the voices of the children.

But in the house Pennie was holding Helen in her strong young arms, and loudly expressing her opinion of the domestic troubles.

Stopping to talk to Daisy and Lily, her uncle could hear the fresh, clear voice.

"It is a burning shame!" Pennie was saying. "Father and mother will never consent to your being turned out of doors in this way."

Turned out of doors!

Roger Wetherill felt his pulse rising.

"But, Pennie, I must go," said the sweet voice, that strangely stirred the heart of the kindly bachelor; "I cannot stay now. And besides, dear—don't feel hurt, will you?—I am afraid I cannot bear the winter's work again.

"Oh, Helen, don't talk so. It is simply brutal to have you attempt such work as we do. What can mother be thinking of to let you wash and scrub?"

"But you all do it."

"But we are all strong and used to it. If you could only sew and do the lighter work."

"But then your aunt says that is putting on airs."

"Yes; I heard her tell you yesterday, when you were on your knees scrubbing, that you lived like a queen! I'd like to ——."

"Hush, Pennie! She is your aunt, and has a right here. I must go."

"But where?"

"Back to London. I can open a boarding-school, or take in sewing. I can live somehow, and, Pennie, your uncle Roger is so very kind—do you think I might venture to borrow a little money of him, until I can get started in some business?"

"No!"

This, coming from a strong, indignant male voice at the door, caused a start and cry from both Pennie and Helen.

"No," said Roger, entering the little room, "he will not lend you one penny. If you take anything from me, Helen, you must take all. I am a lonely man, and the greatest happiness I have known for years has been with you and the baby girls. I cannot let this happiness drift out of my life, if I may keep it.

"Helen," and the strong voice sank to tenderness, "I love you very dearly. Will you be my wife? Will you let my arm come between you and care, want, or insult?"

The pale, sweet face flushed rosily.

The large, soft eyes grew dim with tears of gratitude and love.

In the light of his words Helen read the reason why this friend, above all others, had seemed the nearest, and knew she could give tender affection to Roger Wetherill—not the rosy love of her girlhood, but a strong, enduring love for life.

"Uncle Roger has asked Helen to marry him, and Helen did not say no."

"Oh, how thankful I am!" cried Mrs. Hastings.

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Noah.

"The designing minx!" cried Aunt Penelope, and went into genuine hysterics on the spot.

And Pennie, springing up from the low seat on which she had sunk, hurried to her father, mother, and aunt who were in solemn conclave in the kitchen, and threw in her bombshell.

But all her sighs, groans, and bitter words did not further disturb the tender heart they had once nearly broken.

Roger was there to defend his betrothed, and soon Roger took his wife and her babies to his own home, where Penelope comes but seldom, and thoroughly understands that she cannot come at all unless she treats her brother's wife with respect, if not with affection.

A MADDER IF NOT A WISER MAN.—The denouement was brought about in this way: He had decided to make her a formal offer of his hand and heart—all he was worth and then he hoped to be indulged in some lover lover like demonstrations, the young lady so far being coolly indifferent in her manner to him. He attributed this to maidenly reserve, for it never occurred to him that she was not in love with him. He cautiously prefaced his desolation with a few questions.

Did she love him well enough to live in a cottage with him? Was she a good cook and bottle-washer? Did she think it a wife's duty to make home happy? Would she consult his tastes and wishes concerning her associates and pursuits in life? Was she economical? Could she make her own clothes, etc?

The young lady said that before she answered his questions she would assure him of some negative virtues she possessed. She never drank, smoked or chewed; never owed a bill to her laundry or tailor; never stayed out all night playing billiards; never lounged on the corner and ogled giddy girls; never stood in with the boys for cigars and wine suppers.

"Now," said she, rising indignantly, "I am assured by those who know that you do all those things, and it is rather absurd for you to expect all the virtues in me while you do not possess any of them yourself. I can never be your wife," and she bowed him out and left him standing on the cold door step, a madder if not a wiser man.

Bric-a-Brac.

MARSUPIALS.—All the animals of Australasia are marsupials, that is animals that carry their young after birth in a pouch in their breasts, from the pigmy pitaroo and the haunting phalangers up to the giant kangaroo.

BLANKETS.—Blankets took their name from Sir Thomas Blanket, of Bristol, England, who made them during the fourteenth century; while worsted is so called because it was first manufactured in the town of Worsted.

HISSING.—Hissing means different things according to where you happen to be at the time. In West Africa the natives hiss when they are astonished; in the New Hebrides when they see anything beautiful. The Basutos applaud a popular orator in their assemblies by hissing at him. The Japanese, again, show their reverence by a hiss, which has probably somewhat the force of the "hush" with which we command silence.

A QUEER BOOK.—There is an old book bound in sheepskin in Nashville, Tenn., which was about the only thing left by a young journalist named Charles Rutlege Whipple. The book has a chain around it with a padlock, and Whipple never read a line in it in his life, and never opened it except after dark. He claimed it to be an heirloom, bringing misfortune to its possessor. Soon after a futile effort to get rid of it, he died, suddenly.

THE ORANGE TREE.—The orange-tree bears at one time what may be called three crops in different stages—the blossom, the immature fruit, and ripe oranges. Its botanical name is Citrus, said to be derived from the town of Citron, in Judea. It belongs to the genus of plants known as the natural order of *Aurantiaceæ*, or "golden fruit bearers;" and thus it requires no great stretch of the imagination to suppose that the "golden apples" of the Garden of the Hesperides were oranges.

LUCKY DAYS.—Prospective brides may be interested to learn that there are thirty-two days in the year on which it is unlucky to marry, according to the authority of a manuscript dated in the fifteenth century. These are January 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 15; February 6, 7, 18; March 1, 6, 8; April 6, 11; May 5, 6, 7; June 7, 15; July 5, 10; August 15, 19; September 6, 7; October 6; November 15, 16, and December 15, 16, 17. Consequently January is the worst month and October the best month in the year for marriage.

SNAILS.—Snails are largely eaten on the Continent. In the markets of Spain may be counted as many as fifteen different species offered for sale; while snail-gardens are common all over Europe. There is, for example, one at Ulm, near Wurtemburg, which sends out no fewer than ten millions of the largest to be fattened in other gardens before being sent to the various convents in Austria for consumption during Lent. Large quantities of the common snail are sold in Covent-Garden Market to the foreign colonies in London. It is also said that they are collected round London for exportation on a small scale to Paris.

MODESTY.—There was once to be a meeting of the flowers, and the judge was to award a prize to the one pronounced the most beautiful. "Who shall have the prize?" said the rose, stalking forth in all the consciousness of beauty. "Who shall have the prize?" said the other flowers, advancing each with conscious pride, and each imagining it would be herself. "I will take a peep at these beauties," thought the violet, as she lay in her humble bed, not presuming to attend the meeting. "I will see them as they pass." But as she raised her lowly head to peep out of her hiding-place, she was observed by the judge, who immediately pronounced her the most beautiful, because the most modest.

JAPANESE FUNERALS.—Japanese funerals are always conducted at sunset, in accordance with a superstition that is rather beautiful than otherwise. The procession is headed by priests and a company of musicians, who play upon sambseus and beat tom-toms. The coffin is a wooden tub in which the deceased is squatting as he has lived, with his feet tucked under him. There is this difference, however: The face of the dead man is looking toward the North, whereas this position is religiously avoided by the living Japanese. Indeed, the points of the compass are frequently marked on the ceilings of sleeping-rooms, that the sleeper may arrange his mats so as to avoid this unfavorable position. The wealthy classes are buried in earthen jars instead of wooden tubs, but the mode of arrangement is the same.

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

BY J. M.

Is it worth while to jostle a brother,
Bearing his load on the rough road of life?
Is it worth while that we jeer at each other,
In blackness of heart, that we war to the knife?
God pity us all in our pitiful plight.

God pity us all as we jostle each other;
God pardon us all for the triumphs we feel
When a fellow goes down 'neath his load on the heather,
Pierced to the heart; words are keener than steel,
And mightier far for woe than for weal.

Were it not well in this brief life journey,
On over the isthmus, down into the tide,
We give him a fish instead of a serpent,
Ere folding the hands to be and abide
Forever, and aye, in dust at his side?

Look at the roses saluting each other;
Look at the herds all in peace on the plain;
Man, and man only, makes war on his brother,
And laughs in his heart at his peril and pain,
Shamed by the beasts that go down on the plain!

Is it worth while that we battle to humble
Some poor fellow down in the dust?
God pity us all! Time too soon will tumble
All of us together, like leaves in a gust,
Humbled, indeed, down into the dust.

TWICE MARRIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.—[CONTINUED.]

"WOULD you prefer to accompany your sister, Monsieur de St. Hilaire?" he asked. "I will gladly escort Miss Lloyd to the Castle, and we could make any other arrangement in returning."

Evan made no opposition, but rather sullenly occupied himself in repairing the damage to the reins, in which Paul assisted him in equal silence.

"I will make an amendment to your plan," said Lucy, hurriedly. "Suppose I play guard on this formidable brother of mine, and you, Mr. Thornton, and M. de St. Hilaire, ride together to Chirk? Evan will have forgotten his admonitions before we return."

Evan eagerly seconded the plan.

Paul lifted Lucy from her horse, and assisted her into the carriage, and after a short delay, the little party again set off.

Paul had said little hitherto in acknowledgement of the clergyman's service, but when they were fairly en route once more, he said, feelingly, "You have laid me under an obligation never to be forgotten or repaid, Mr. Thornton.

"Laura, I believe, is dearer to me than sisters generally are to brothers.

"We are almost alone in the world, and that unites us closely."

"I can understand that," said the clergyman.

"I am quite alone; but I can imagine what a sister must be, and such a sister as yours.

"You must be proud of her, M. de St. Hilaire. Few women would have behaved as she did just now."

"Yes, Laura has plenty of courage," he replied. "She could bear danger to life. God grant she may not be tried yet more severely! She would ill endure some kind of trouble."

Paul spoke almost to himself, and Mr. Thornton made no reply, but his thoughts were grave and troubled.

"Was that beautiful, high-spirited girl in love with Evan—Evan the murderer, and he the tacit accomplice of his crime?"

It was a wretched idea for the conscientious, sensitive clergyman.

And yet to bring disgrace, death, perhaps, into the family he honored—to the woman he loved, however hopelessly—could it be right, could it be common humanity, without better proof than the mere words and noise he had accidentally overheard?

It was a knotty point to decide, and Mr. Thornton shook off the consideration for future observation and thought, and began to do the honors of the country to his foreign companion.

That French noble and English curate were much alike in many respects, dissimilar as they were in rank and position; and during the three miles that remained to be traversed, they became both mutually interested in each other.

It was a noble spirit, that young curate's, when he could do such justice to a dreaded rival.

Laura de St. Hilaire had sat for some minutes in silence, musing over the events of the last hour, and the conversation which had preceded the accident, till the same galling sense of humiliation and indignant resentment at apparent trifling harassed her proud spirit.

She was restlessly anxious to clear herself in Evan's estimation from the imputation of being so easily won, until fairly sought.

"Lucy," she exclaimed, suddenly, "is not that lovely girl I saw at church yesterday a friend of yours?"

"Winifred Herbert? Oh yes, a very dear friend," she replied. "We were brought up almost like sisters."

"Why, Mr. Lloyd," said Laura, turning suddenly to Evan, "you never told me this when I was raving about that beautiful rustic.

"Lucy, let us go and see her to-morrow; but, remember, without these tiresome brothers of ours."

Evan felt that all was at stake, and suppressed with some difficulty the annoyance and resentment he would willingly have vented on his fair tormentor.

"Pardon me, Miss de St. Hilaire," said he, "but you have already laid your commands on me to introduce you to that old farm house, that has so excited your curiosity, and I shall not be banished from the party.

"Besides, your brother would not consent to give up an introduction to your 'beauty.'"

"And they would think it unkind if Evan did not go, after being away so long," pleaded Lucy; "I think they must be allowed to go, Miss de St. Hilaire."

"Very well, at your intercession, Lucy, and on condition that you drop that formal 'Miss' in future," said Laura.

A glance at Evan satisfied the pride of the high-spirited beauty that he had understood the rebuff administered, and from that moment she became more naturally gay, and resumed her usual manner towards the offender.

Still, a cloud was cast on the spirits of the party, they scarcely knew why, and after a brief survey of the Castle ruins they returned in good time to the Grange, where a tempting "tea dinner" awaited them.

"Sir William is not well," was the reply of Lady Lloyd to the young count's inquiry for his host; and the old nervous look came over her face.

Mr. Thornton made no remark, but for the remainder of the evening he devoted himself with more than usual unobtrusive gentleness towards their gentle hostess.

CHAPTER XX.

THEY had all retired for the night at the Grange—all save Evan Lloyd.

At least, so he believed, and he sat in the large chair in the old fashioned drawing-room, and fell into deep and gloomy thought.

But it was no pleasant reverie of early days and sweet old memories, recalled by the familiar objects around, and the recent meeting with dearly loved ones.

No, his thoughts were dark and troubled and his anticipations for the future were scarcely more pleasant than his retrospect of the past.

One error had led to another—led to crime, and that crime might entail others.

He could scarcely hope that Winifred Herbert would bear up under the load of misery he was preparing for her.

She was already much changed, though not in heart.

Would that she had been! then he would not have had the terror of her death on his conscience.

There had been one victim already.

Would there be more?

And yet he did not hesitate.

Perhaps he dared not—perhaps he felt that it would be impossible to avow his bond to the farmer's daughter and to settle down in that quiet spot with bare income that would be their portion, and with the wretched memory of the past to haunt him like a spectre.

No, for such a wife he could not sacrifice the wealth and distinction which a marriage with the beautiful French girl would secure to him.

The excitement, the forgetfulness that would, he thought, be his portion.

He almost hated that sweet, gentle Winifred, as the cause of his guilt, and his unconquerable remorse.

Suddenly a hand was laid gently on his shoulder.

He started, as if an iron grasp had seized him, rather than that soft touch.

It was Lady Lloyd.

For the first time Evan realized how changed in those short months his beautiful mother was.

The delicate skin had grown pallid, and the pure forehead was threaded with wrinkles.

If Evan really loved anybody with some degree of warm, unselfish affection, it was his mother.

This change in her went to his heart.

"Mother, darling, what is it?" he asked. "Why are you not in bed? You look worn and pale, now I have time to fairly examine you, and you are not disguised by excitement and forced cheerfulness. Something is wrong; what is it?"

Gwendaline Lloyd might fairly be classed among those domestic heroines whose fortitude is more severely tried than numbers who take their place in the world's annals.

The bravest are at times unnerved, and so long panted for some relief, some sympathy.

She threw her arms round her son's neck and burst into tears.

"Come, come, little mother, this must not be. Tell me at once what ails you," he said, half-impatiently.

"Oh, Evan, my son, my darling boy, I have so longed to tell you what I could not bear should be even suspected by any other human being."

Evan's face grew dark, and he loosened his mother's clinging grasp from his neck.

"Mother," said he, "I am a bad person to trifle with; you know that of old; let me hear at once what you have to say."

Lady Lloyd raised herself, and taking her son's half-withdrawn hand, said quietly, "Come with me."

Evan could not resist, though his heart quailed at following that gentle woman's guidance.

She went softly across the hall, and opened the door of the library, and beckoning her son to come in, she carefully closed the door.

A strong, sickening color pervaded the apartment that made the whole atmosphere heavy and dead even in that pure, fresh region.

An atmosphere that Evan understood at once, and the color in his face deepened into fierce flushes.

It was ever so from a boy, ever under the thundercloud of some passion.

He strode hastily to the couch, on which lay a figure carefully covered by a warm, soft knitted blanket, and snatched the coverlet rudely from the face.

"Is this my father?" he exclaimed fiercely, his voice shaking with passion.

Lady Lloyd laid her hand on his arm, pale and trembling.

Nothing could make her forget her respect for the husband of her youth.

"Is this my father?" he exclaimed again shaking off her hold, and grasping the exposed arm of the prostrate form with a violence that made the insensible baronet groan and mutter in his heavy slumber.

"It is my husband, and your father, Evan," she replied. "Never forget that. But it was not for this I brought you here. Take your hand away."

Evan slowly withdrew his hand, but looked fiercely back at the couch.

As the gentle mother strove to draw him away, his fingers worked and clenched as if he would gladly have turned and strangled that intoxicated parent in his slumber. The wife's face was full of sorrow, the son's was black with rage.

She drew him from the room; it was no place for what must follow.

"How long has it been?" he asked, when they were once more in the drawing-room.

"Ever since his illness, Evan," replied his mother. "I think the shock of the fire and your going was too much for him; and when he got better, everything made him anxious, and, I suppose, drove him to it."

"Do you then mean to find fault with me for going?" exclaimed Evan. "Am I to remain in this corner of the world for ever to prevent my father from becoming a drunkard?—a Lloyd, a drunkard?"

"Hush, Evan," said his mother, reprovingly. "No one ever called him that before in my presence. I will not hear it from his son."

"But I doubt not it is said all over the village," retorted the son, fiercely. "No doubt every one knows it; and the St. Hilaires, the children of his friend, they will soon find it out, and despise us all. Mother, I could——"

He stopped.

The hand which had fostered his infancy was laid with calm dignity on his lips.

"Evan," said she, "though you forget the respect you owe to your father, remember what is due me. 'Honor your father and your mother,' or your days shall not be 'long in the land.' God's words will surely be fulfilled, my son, and sin will be visited on the transgressor of his direct command."

Evan was somewhat awed at his mother's words.

It was so new for her gentle lips to utter warnings, that they came almost like a prophecy.

"Forgive me, mother," said he; "I would not willingly anger you, nor wound your feelings; but it maddens me to think of such degradation; and then the St. Hilaires must find it out."

"No, no, I will manage that," said the mother; "and you will help me, dear boy, to persuade him—and he is so good and amiable at all times.

"He would die before you should blush for him, my son, before your friends; he would never let you suffer for his errors. Do not think unjustly of him, Evan. Remember what a noble heart and mind he had."

"I know, I know, mother," said Evan, "and that astonished me. Before I left home he was one of the most abstemious men in the Principality. What can have given rise to this?"

"I do not know," she replied. "Ever since the night of the fire he has not been the same.

"The very mention of that night is always enough to drive him to this, and I have learnt from the servants that the first attack of his illness seemed to be brought on by a visit from that gloomy, morose workman of yours from Manchester; you know whom I mean."

"Jonas Harper?" said Evan, starting violently.

"Yes," continued his mother; "and once if not twice, since, the man has been here, and the visit has always brought on a terrible fit of——"

"Drunkenness," said Evan bitterly.

"It is deeper than that," said his mother, sorrowfully; "and it is for that I wished to confide to you what I have managed hitherto to hide from Lucy.

"I thought you might know something that would throw a light on the mystery."

"Why? how? what makes you think so?" inquired Evan, with startling abruptness.

"Nay, dear boy, surely it is not unnatural that you might have some idea of your father's affairs," said Lady Lloyd. "I once got Mr. Thornton to sound him as to any pecuniary embarrassments that might have harassed him, and whether the insurance money had covered the loss; but it had so terrible an effect on him that I never allowed the matter to be alluded to again."

"Surely he does not grudge me that small compensation," said Evan, almost fiercely; "it seems it is all that I am likely to have, any way."

"Hush, Evan!" said his mother; "I never meant that. I did not even know you had it, but I sometimes think it is connected with that sad business, and so does Mr. Thornton, I know."

"Mr. Thornton will be good enough to mind the affairs that belong to him, or he may rue it," said Evan. "I can't think why you encourage that canting hypocrite about the house, mother. Surely you don't want Lucy to be a beggarly parson's wife?"

"I do not think there is the slightest danger of it, if danger it is," replied Lady Lloyd, quietly. "In my opinion Lucy has nothing but friendship and esteem for Mr. Thornton; and I desire nothing better for either of you than a marriage with one who will be as true and unselfish and noble-minded as Charles Thornton. I have been very happy without riches, till lately," she added, mournfully.

"But I intend to marry a rich wife, mother," said Evan, sharply. "I want no wife to pull me down."

"Oh, my son, what need——"

"The more need, dear mother, from what I have seen this night," interrupted Evan. "But tell me, is my father in debt?"

"I think not," she replied; "I know of no debts, unless in things quite apart from my province."

"Well, I must see what can be done," said Evan; "there is yet sometime, and I suppose I can find him sufficiently sober to speak of business before I go."

Lady Lloyd colored, and the son relented a little.

"Well, we won't talk of this any more," said Evan. "He must not destroy your comfort, that is all. So now, dear mother, let us go to bed; but stay; tell me, before we go, what you think of our fair guest."

Lady Lloyd hesitated; at length she replied, "She is very handsome, very striking.

"We have certainly no one like her in our neighborhood."

"And charming mother," said Evan. "Did you ever see a more splendid-looking creature, and so fascinating."

"True, Evan, said his mother, with a deep sigh. "I never saw any one so handsome except, I was going to say, Winifred Herbert; but then of course it is impossible to compare them.

"Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire is so much more brilliant and stylish and differently dressed. Our little farmer's daughter is like the soft moon by the bright sun in comparison. I saw Laura draw all eyes on her in church yesterday."

"Then there was a little excitement among the natives!" remarked Evan, smilingly; "I fancied so myself."

"It was but natural, Evan," said his mother. "In so quiet a place as ours, strangers far less attractive than our guests would excite observation."

"But that is no answer to my question, mother," said Evan; "how do you like Laura de St. Hilaire?"

"I am too old-fashioned to form an opinion of a person in so short a time," she replied.

"I admire Laura, as every one must, and I think I should soon learn to love her. She has something very winning about her when she likes, in spite of her waywardness and caprice.

"Poor girl! she has needed a mother's guidance, but I think she is a noble creature at heart."

"I know you must think so," said Evan; "your judgment, dear mother, seldom errs.

"Well, a husband would soon supply the deficiency, and bring the wild bird into proper subjection."

"My dear Evan," said Lady Lloyd, looking eagerly at her son, "surely you do not think——"

"Why not?" he exclaimed; "a lovely, high-born girl, and an heiress, evidently well-inclined to fall in love with me. I do not see any reason for throwing away such good fortune."

"That is not the right feeling to begin such a weighty affair with, Evan," said his mother, reproachfully. "I would rather you spoke of the true, loving woman's heart, the feminine modesty and gentleness, the home qualities of the girl you intend to choose for your companion for life.

"Remember, your home will be a quiet and secluded one, better fitted for a dove than an eagle."

Evan flushed, for his mother's portrait was that of Winifred Herbert.

"Well, well," said he, "I will do nothing hastily, mother; but, perhaps, my taste is not quite so homely as your imaginary daughter-in-law would gratify."

Lady Lloyd smiled, and with the simplicity of her transparent nature, betrayed her thoughts.

"You have not seen Winifred Herbert since your return, Evan," she said; "I was thinking of asking her to-morrow. She has not been well lately, poor girl, and the change might do her good."

"I hardly think she would like it," said Evan. "She would be quite lost with these foreigners.

"She and Laura have nothing in common."

"I fear not," said his mother; "but still it would only be common attention on our part."

"I did call on the Herberts," said Evan; "and I thought them rather cool. I think, my dear mother," he added, "you had better not do anything in the matter at present. Under present circumstances the fewer persons there are at our house the better."

Lady Lloyd could have replied that the girl who had been domesticated at their house from early childhood would be a more natural guest in the time of trouble than the foreign strangers now their visitors, but she was little used to contention, especially with her son, and with a quiet acquiescence in his proposal that they should now retire to bed, she kissed him tenderly and retired, to commit him and her erring husband to that Almighty Being who can turn all hearts at His good pleasure.

CHAPTER XXI.

IF man could have any possible excuse for such faithless inconstancy as Evan Lloyd's, it might certainly have been found in that lovely, bright creature who presented herself at the breakfast-table on the following morning, more radiant and animated than she had appeared since her arrival.

Such was the secret reflection of his mother, as Laura de St. Hilaire stooped down to kiss her, with winning affection of look and tone, and then took her place beside Evan, with a gay reproach for his shortcomings of the previous day.

She could not wonder that a young man, so ardent and impressionable to beauty, should forget all else in that brilliant combination of loveliness and fascination.

Evan exchanged a triumphant glance with his mother, which did not escape Paul's grave observant eye.

"What are we to do to-day?" asked the count, after a short pause.

"Oh, that is settled long since," replied Laura. "Lucy and I are going to see that beautiful girl at Llanover Farm, and you Mr. Lloyd are not to accompany us."

"I protest against that," said her brother, laughing. "Remember, Laura, that I have a perfect mania for farming, so you must take me with you, to profit by that respectable old gentleman's experience."

"But I cannot answer to my conscience to expose you to that lovely girl's proximity," said Laura, laughing.

"I am quite safe," he replied, significantly, with the slightest possible glance at Lucy. "I promise to leave you to make acquaintance with the young lady, Laura, while I get friends with the father."

"And I will play propriety with the old dame—a penance which would atone for a week's sins at least," said Lucy, gaily.

"And I?" said Evan.

"Can be a supernumerary unattached," replied Laura, "and very grateful, I hope, for the permission to be near any of the regular body; so hurry everybody. I am in a perfect fever to be off."

Laura's vivacity was infectious.

The breakfast was concluded more gaily than it had begun; the pony carriage was brought round, and the two girls were handed in before another hour has passed, and then Paul and Evan set off on their walk to Llanover Farm.

Evan had sundry misgivings as to the result of the interview between the unconscious rivals, but he had a secret confidence in the honor and feminine reticence of the injured girl, which was an involuntary compliment, little intended or appreciated by his selfish mind.

On the whole, his absence might be rather less dangerous than his presence, during the visit of the wilful Laura.

This once comfortably settled, he gave a long whistle, and turned to his companion with a more cheerful air than he had worn since the expedition was decided on, and began to do the honors of the country round.

"And that was where your celebrated Mill was situated!" said Paul, as they passed the bridge. "Is it not to be built up again?"

"I really do not know," was the cold reply; "it depends on uncertain contigencies, so far as I am concerned."

As Evan spoke, a figure emerged from the ruins, and came slowly towards them. The young man started, for the person who now came towards them was supposed by Evan to very far away.

It was his old overlooker, Hugh Evans, who accosted his late master as if they had only parted on the previous evening.

"Good morning, Mr. Lloyd," said he; "glad to see you looking so well, sir."

"Why, Evans! I thought you were in Cumberland," said Evan, nodding rather stiffly. "What has brought you here so suddenly?"

"Business, Mr. Lloyd," he replied, "which I will explain to you if you are at leisure; if not, I can wait."

"Of course you can," said Evan, haughtily; "you do not suppose I can leave my friend to speak to you. Besides, I cannot imagine what you can possibly want with me."

"Very likely, Mr. Lloyd," said Evans; "however, I can soon explain what it is, when you have leisure to attend to me. When and where shall I wait on you?"

The words and tone were at variance; one so respectful, the other so sneeringly, contemptuously threatening. Evan winced under the quiet, significant look, though he told himself such terror was absurd—puerile.

"You can come up to the Grange this evening, between seven and eight," he replied; "but I cannot give you long, as I have friends staying with me who require my attention. Good morning."

He turned away, and walked rapidly forward, so rapidly, that Paul could hardly keep pace with him.

As they disappeared behind a turn in the road, Evans stood looking after them, with a sardonic smile upon his hard features.

"What's the game now, I wonder?" he thought. "'Tis droll, his taking that young foreigner to the Farm, unless matters are altered a good deal since I was there; anyhow, I'll soon find out."

He walked off in another direction, which however led by a circuitous route to the Farm, and was soon lost to view.

The young men soon reached the confines of the Farm, and stood for a few minutes contemplating the smiling landscape before them.

"After all, Mr. Lloyd, there is nothing to compare to your rich fertile, homelike scenes," said Paul, after a few minutes' pause; "and see, there is the proprietor of this lovely place, if I am not mistaken; see, there, in the distance!"

"Yes, I believe it is the farmer," replied Evan, carelessly. "You must excuse me if I cannot enter into your raptures, De St. Hilaire. Remember, I have been familiar with every inch of this ground from infancy. However, I will transfer you to old Herbert's care; he will take in any amount of such——"

He stopped, and Paul finished the sentence.

"Stuff! you would say. You are a terrible apostle, Lloyd. But come, let us join the worthy man, who seems inclined to escape us."

Farmer Herbert was turning in another direction as the young men came up to him.

The greeting to Evan was respectfully cordial, and he and Paul seemed to understand each other at once.

There is a sort of freemasonry between honest, noble natures, which is quickly felt by each; and before half an hour had gone by the two men, so opposite in rank—aye, and even origin, were mutually delighted with each other.

The farmer explained all the peculiarities of his farming as far as possible to his intelligent auditor.

But Evan soon grew weary of the agricultural talk, in which he had no interest, and at last, when the two new acquaintances proposed going off to see a steam plow at work some few fields off, Evan cried for quarter.

"I have far too dull a mind for these abstruse 'skientic' subjects, as our Hannah observed yesterday," he said; "so I shall leave the count in your charge, Mr. Herbert, and go to the house. I suppose you won't be over an hour, or our patience will be exhausted."

They willingly assented to the arrangement, and Evan walked away in the direction of the farmhouse.

It was rather a "risky" affair to use his own mental expression, the encounter with those two beautiful girls whom he was so treacherously deceiving; but he had confidence in his own powers, and in the timid, womanly pride of Winifred; and he had, moreover, a strange sort of amusement in the very danger and strategical manœuvres of such an interview.

So he walked firmly on with as careless an air as if about to pay a visit merely to the old dame herself, perhaps quite as much occupied with speculations as to the evening's interview as the morning's.

The wretched secret that burdened his heart, made the slightest occurrence which could be in any way connected with that fatal period alarming to him.

Suddenly he thought he heard voices—female, young joyous voices—that he knew well, even at the distance from which the sounds evidently came, and in spite of his bravery a quick flush rose to his face.

It was no trifling ordeal that he was about to encounter; the quick, jealous perceptions of two loving and exacting hearts, the questions, the surmises which he should have to encounter hereafter.

And yet everything would depend on baffling all suspicion, preserving the confidence, and silencing the distrust or resentment of one or both for the present.

He stopped involuntarily, to gain self-possession and nerve for the interview so near at hand, and to assume the gay good-humor which could best carry him through the next hour.

Suddenly he started.

He thought he heard a smothered scream—a cry for help.

He paused to listen.

Again it came—a long, piercing, shrill scream, and he thought when he could distinguish his own name in Laura de St. Hilaire's well-known voice, though the tones were so unlike, in their piteous agony, to the gay, sweet accents of that usually bright girl.

Again and again it sounded, mingled with another, but softer, more subdued cry, and then all was still.

For a moment Evan stood paralyzed and motionless, and then he rushed like a madman in the direction of those agonizing shrieks.

* * * * *

Lucy and Laura had driven away from home full of that bright, sweet, youthful gaiety, and sparkling fancies, that make the time of "maiden gladness" so lovely and so enchanting to the half child, half woman herself, and those who look upon her.

"What a lovely home yours is, Lucy, and what a charm there is in your Welsh scenery!" said Laura, as they approached the Farm. "Why, that quaint old house, with that Virginia creeper and the japonica growing up its white gables, and the magnificent trees and neat outbuildings, is a complete rustic paradise. One would not expect such good taste in a farmer and his wife."

"You forget the farmer's daughter," said Lucy, smiling. "She is as refined and elegant in her ways and ideas as she is beautiful. Besides, she is really well-born, and of as old a family as we are—as I am, I mean," she added, with a blush.

"Nay, dear, you need not fancy I place my descent further back than the old Welsh antediluvians your brother descants on so learnedly," said Laura. "But see, the farmer's daughter is in the garden. How lovely she looks, Lucy! I suppose it is because her beauty and yours are so unlike our foreign style, that I admire you so much."

"Reverse the picture, and fancy the impression you create in our natives," laughed Lucy, too simply unselfish to notice the compliment. "But take care as I drive in, or you will hurt your hand on the gate-post."

Winifred Herbert was standing in the garden tending a pet dahlia, when the sound of carriage-wheels fell on her ear.

At first she sickened with dread at the thought of seeing the same gay party dash by, on some new expedition, leaving her more desolate by the gloomy contrast.

Then she eagerly turned to look, by the very fascination that an unwelcome object exerts, as if there were a luxury in torment, and then she saw that the well-known pony-carriage contained but two ladies, one of whom she at once knew by the long, floating feather in the coquettish hat to be her dreaded rival, the beautiful French girl.

Then the pretty little equipage stopped at the half-open gate.

The sensible little ponies pushed it open with their noses, and in another moment had turned into the little domain.

Winifred turned cold and sick.

Then a dash of womanly pride came to her aid.

Lucy, Evan's sister, should not guess her secret, nor should this intruder on their peaceful seclusion triumph over her humble rival.

Winifred was of as sweet and loving a nature as ever beat in woman's breast; but she had been sorely tried of late, and even the very humility of her heart gave fresh bitterness to her feelings toward the unconscious Laura.

She lingered for a moment, supposing they would go into the house, and hoping for a few minutes' respite from the dreaded interview; but then she saw Lucy coming through the thick bushes towards her, and the taller form of the French girl close behind.

An instant's hesitation, and then she went forward to meet her visitors, her native grace and refinement supplying all more artificial polish as she welcomed them to the Farm.

"Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire is in love with your whole domain, to say nothing of yourself, Winny," observed Lucy, after a few minutes' chat. "So I shall leave you to show her everything about the place—chickens, turkeys, peacocks, bees, and all your treasures, not forgetting your favorite seat above the mill-dam. I shall go and learn housewifery from your good mother the while, and when Evan and the count arrive I shall take the pains to bring them to you."

Winifred looked half-frightened at the idea of being left to entertain the French lady alone, and ventured on a word, or rather a look, of remonstrance; but Laura eagerly seconded the proposal, delighted at the opportunity of getting acquainted with the fair girl to whom she had taken so strange a fancy, and of looking into all the mysteries of the Welsh farmhouse.

So Lucy ran off to the house, and the rivals were left thus strangely in each other's sole society.

Those two girls, as they stood for a moment after Lucy had disappeared, were a pretty contrast, and to an acute observer a remarkable one.

Laura, with her dark, foreign, piquant beauty, looking with genuine, half-disappointed admiration on her beautiful companion, disappointed at the coldness and reserve which made Winifred look so statue-like, yet honest in her belief that she had never seen a more lovely creature.

And Winifred in her turn confessed, in even painful humility, the extreme attractiveness of her rival—the brilliant beauty, the elegance of dress and air, the galling ease and cordiality, which to her morbid sensibility spoke of such triumphant security in her own power and superiority.

But, however painful and disquieting these feelings to the two fair girls, they suited so well their respective styles of beauty that they had never, perhaps, looked more attractive than at that moment of mutual doubt and contemplation, ere they commenced their tour of inspection.

"I want to see and understand everything in this country said Laura, as they at last turned from the spot; "so please gratify my curiosity, Miss Herbert, if it will not be too much of an imposition on your kindness."

It was impossible to refuse, and moreover, Laura had a strange faculty of getting her own way with everyone.

Winifred gave a faint smile at the French girl's eagerness about what was to her so familiar and commonplace, and they began their tour of inspection.

The garden, orchard, aviary, chicken-house, and the neat dairy, which was a short distance from the house were all visited.

Winifred was gentle and soft, as was her nature, in her replies to the questions poured upon her, but she asked little, and volunteered nothing in her turn.

Once she said timidly:

"But I suppose, Miss de St. Hilaire, you have heard a great deal of our customs from Mr. Lloyd?"

"Oh, yes," she replied; "at home I regularly besieged him with questions when we were walking or riding together; but the only way of understanding any description is by contrasting it with something that is present. I could almost have sketched the Grange and drawn portraits of Lady Lloyd and Lucy. But he never used to speak of you," she added suddenly; "and I wonder at that, for Lucy says you were almost brought up together."

"I dare say he did not think you could be interested in so insignificant a person," replied Winifred, with a swelling heart.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the lively Laura; "I really beg your pardon, but you must know better than that, Winifred. I must call you by that name. It sounds like that of some old saint, and you really look like one, I should be half-inclined to adopt you for my patron if I were a Romanist."

Winifred half-smiled, half-sighed, as she said, "Then you are a Protestant?"

Here then was another bar destroyed between Evan and the fair stranger, thought Winifred.

"Yes," replied Laura, "did you not see me at church the first day we were here? I noticed you, and asked Mr Lloyd who you were, and he pretended not know whom I meant; but see! what a splendid view there must be from that old ruin! What is it."

"The ruin of the flax mill that was burnt down about a year ago," replied Winifred, averting her head.

"The mill!" repeated Laura; "that seems a sore subject with Mr. Lloyd; he never likes speaking of it. But what a romantic-looking ruin it is! I could fancy it the ruin of an old castle, with that draw-bridge-looking erection over the rustling stream. What is that?"

"Only the bridge over the mill-dam," replied Winifred; "it keeps the stream confined. I suppose they intend to rebuild it some day, and leave that dam still standing."

"Oh, I must go and see it!" said Laura. "Why, it is only just crossing that narrow field and path, I see. Let us go, Winifred."

"But they will be expecting us, Miss St. Hilaire, and——"

"Never mind," interrupted Laura, "they can wait."

"And my father says the bridge is not very safe," continued Winifred; "it has been much neglected, and the last Winter was so stormy that he thinks the foundations may be a little decayed. There were once actual floods that swelled the waters frightfully."

"Now, I shall certainly go," exclaimed Laura. "I like excitement, and I am not so heavy as to make the bridge fall down. You can stay, if you like, Winifred; but I intend to see that view before I go into the house and play propriety to your good mother. I suppose my foreign ways would shock the dear old housewife."

As she laughingly concluded her speech, the wilful girl bounded over a low hedge and across the field, looking back in gay defiance at Winifred, who stood for a moment, a dull pain at her heart paralysing her movements.

Laura was so eager to visit a place sacred to Evan Lloyd, that the poor little unacknowledged wife felt a joyous conviction that such capricious anxiety for so simple an object could only arise from affection for him who had once resided in that dreary ruin.

It was certainly only Laura's vivid imagination that had invested in it with any especial romance, for the place was decidedly like what it really was, an extensive building destroyed by fire and not in the least picturesque or castle like in its desolation.

However, Winifred knew she ought not to let the guest visit the spot alone, and after a few moments pause, she bounded lightly over the hedge, and walked quickly across the narrow piece of ground that divided her from the little bridge.

Laura was already on the tottering erection, gazing down with girlish eagerness on the miniature fall of water, and leaning daringly on the weak palisade that Winifred had warned her against.

Winifred hurried towards the dangerous spot to induce her, if possible, to leave it now that her whim was gratified; but as she approached nearer, her pace was yet more quickened, and a faint cry escaped her.

The bridge was falling; she was certain of it.

Even the movement of Laura's light form seemed to agitate the crazy edifice and yet Winifred trembled to alarm her too suddenly lest she should hasten the catastrophe, that might not be so imminent as it appeared.

"Miss St. Hilaire," she said, as quickly as haste and alarm would allow, "come away, I entreat you; don't wait a moment, the bridge is——"

Before Winifred could finish her sentence Laura perceived her danger; the bridge moved visibly under her.

She gave a quick, terrified bound, that completed the mischief; another instant, and the bridge, gradually under-mined by the action of the water and the violence of the strong eddy beneath, gave way with a terrific crash.

A sharp, shrill scream, and the French girl was ingulfed in the whirl of waters beneath, fretted and lashed by the sudden release from their imprisonment, and the splash of the falling bridge.

Winifred gave a quick bound towards the spot, and cried again and again for help; but, alas! before help could come it might be too late.

As a child she had amused herself with swimming in the deep clear stream ere any one else had left their beds.

Would the art come back to her at need?

She looked eagerly for a second into the confused abyss of troubled waters, and through the turgid wave could distinguish

the struggling form and wild, brilliant eyes of the unhappy Laura.

It was not in Winifred's nature to refuse, at any risk to herself, the mute appeal.

She grasped the edge of one of the palisades still standing and flung herself into the abyss clinging tightly to the support, while, with her other hand she grasped a loose plank and threw it to the drowning girl, calling to her, with all her strength, to seize the other end.

But no answer came; only a fresh, wild struggle beneath the surface.

Winifred dived beneath the wave, and extended her arm to the very utmost; something met her hand, but it was a gleam of hope soon to be dispelled.

It was only the white ostrich feather of the hat that shrunk to nothing within her grasp.

Another and more desperate plunge, and this time her hand grasped human hair, and she knew that the form was rising to the surface, and again she shrieked aloud for help.

Laura was yet sensible, for a white arm started up from the water and grasped Winifred so tightly as to half drag down the noble girl, whose strength was scarcely equal to the support of herself and that drooping form against the frail plank.

Every moment she felt the palisade loosening and shaking under her frantic hold, till at last it gave way, and both girls were immersed in the stream.

Winifred did not lose her hold of that long hair, though the water nearly blinded her, and choked the screams that would have yet called for help.

She tried desperately, nobly, to maintain her companion from being carried away by the eddy, and grasped at the loose planks that floated by for help.

At last her senses failed her, and they both sank—sank, and rose once more to the surface, just as a frantic rush of steps was heard, and then a plunge into the stream, and Laura was torn from the clinging, unconscious grasp, and Winifred was left alone.

She felt it; she knew, even in that half-stupefied, unconscious moment that Evan, her husband was bearing her rival away to safety, while she was left to die—she who had risked her own life for that wilful, thoughtless girl.

She must sink unheeded and alone.

It was hard very hard to die so young, but oh, that cruel desertion was worse than a thousand deaths!

A low groan escaped her, and then she knew no more;—all was dark as the grave.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAURA de St. Hilaire was laid on the large couch in the farm house, whither Evan, after rescuing her from the stream, had hastily carried her.

Lucy Lloyd was unfastening her wet cloak, while Mrs. Herbert hastily prepared hot blankets, and ordered heated bricks for the insensible girl; for with all her grumbling discontent and oddities, the farmer's wife had practical sense and ready self-possession in an emergency like this; and Evan stood, gazing in speechless horror at that pale, beautiful face, unmindful of his own dripping clothes and the presence of spectators.

Then the door opened once more, and heavy steps were heard which hastily approached the apartment.

The door flew open, and Hugh Evans, entered, bearing the lifeless form of Winifred in his arms, closely held to his broad chest as if to give it some warmth and life.

Mrs Herbert started gave a smothered cry, and flew to her child, forgetful of the stranger who had till now engrossed her sympathies.

"Oh, Winny, Winny, how came this?" she cried the tears pouring down her face.

"You dying, and I staying here with her! Oh; Hugh Evans, I did not know it; I did not know it."

"Get some blankets hot; don't wait to cry!" said the stern voice of the overlooker.

"But she is dead!" cried the almost frantic mother; "her face is cold as ice."

"No, no, her heart beats against mine—a weak flutter, but 'tis life," said Hugh, his rugged face turned on the harsh countenance of his late master? "Thank God she is alive!"

Evan gave a quiet bitter sneer.

And he really wished her to die?

One would think so from his face and the sharp tone with which he spoke.

"And is this poor lady to die," he said, "because your daughter is hurt?"

Hugh marked the words: they were scored against the speaker.

"Heaven forgive me!" replied Mrs. Herbert; "but blood is thicker than water, and she is our only child."

"But we must not forget the stranger within our gates," said the deep voice of Llewellyn Herbert, who had just been summoned to the spot by a frightened herdsman. "Take the poor young lady to the bedroom, Mr. Lloyd. I will bring my child, and they shall receive equal care at our hands."

His directions were obeyed, and the girls were carried in to the inner room.

Mrs. Herbert and Lucy hastily undressed them, while the servant, aided by the farmer himself made a fire, heated bricks and blankets, and carried them into the next room, where the large clean-looking bed was soon ready to receive the sufferers.

They were true womanly hearts that beat in Lucy Lloyd's and even in the grumbling Mrs. Herbert's bosom, but it was not in woman's nature to be quite impartial in such a case.

It could scarcely be wondered at that they placed Winifred first in the warm bed and bestowed the tenderest kiss on her pale cold face, as they laid her head on the pillow.

And yet Laura was perhaps in the most imminent danger, for her immersion in the water had been somewhat longer and more entire than that of her brave preserver.

Meanwhile Evan paced the floor of that outer room with abrupt strides, as if there were warring feelings in his heart that required movement to still the tumult, while Llewellyn Herbert sat lost in silent thankfulness and prayer.

At last, Evan seemed unable to bear the stillness within the inner room; he approached the door, and knocked.

"Lucy," he whispered.

The young girl approached the door, her sweet face bright through the tears that ran down her cheeks.

"Has she moved?" he asked. "Has she opened her eyes?"

"Yes, she opened her eyes, and whispered something; I think it was her mother's name," replied Lucy.

Evan turned away impatiently, and suppressed the exclamation that sprang to his lips.

"I was speaking of Laura," said he; "of Miss de St. Hilaire, Lucy."

"And forget dear Winny!" said Lucy looking reproachfully at him. "Oh Evan!"

"Nonsense, Lucy," said her brother. "Of course, Laura is under our care. I feel answerable to her brother if anything happens to her; and it seems to me it was owing to Winifred that she got into such danger."

"Oh no," said Lucy; "but hark! she calls me."

Lucy disappeared into the apartment, and Evan once more commenced that restless walk.

"Lucy" said Winifred, feebly, "she moves; her hand is getting warmer. She will live."

"Thank God!" said Lucy, fervently; "but you must not speak, darling Winny. I will go and tell Evan the good news."

When the door closed behind Lucy, the French girl opened her large, dark eyes, and looked restlessly around the room.

"Who is that?" she asked, as her ear caught the quick tread in the outer room.

"No one to disturb you, young lady," replied Mrs. Herbert, whose heart was unconsciously hardening against the poor girl.

"Your brother will be here soon; he is gone to the Grange for the carriage, but you must keep quiet till he comes."

"But it is his step," murmured the half dreaming-girl; "I know it is his step." And as if composed by the very idea, she sank into sleep.

Winifred listened, and shrank further and further away, to the very verge of the bed.

The chill came over that delicate frame once more, and she began to shiver, for the remembrance that she had been left to die in the water fell sharply on her: and she wondered why God had permitted her to be saved, when life was such pain.

The trembling aroused Laura again.

She moved restlessly, opened her eyes, and saw Lucy's face anxiously bending over her.

"Dear Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire," she said, "I entreat you to keep still and calm; you will injure yourself terribly by any exertion."

"Your brother," she said—"I cannot rest till I have seen him, and have thanked him. He saved my life, Lucy. Ah, your colder natures cannot understand what we feel."

Lucy hesitated; she knew Mrs. Herbert would be scandalized by such a proceeding; and yet, the red spot on Laura's cheek warned her that opposition might be dangerous.

"Very well, dear, he shall come, but only for a moment," she said and left the room to fulfil the errand. She knew that it would be some time before Paul (who had been merely told that his sister had fallen into the stream and got wet) could return, and if Laura could get some sleep before then, it might restore her.

Evan's face flushed eagerly as he heard the summons, and in a moment he was by the side of the beautiful sufferer, whom he addressed in French, but so low and rapidly, that Lucy whose ear was unpractised in the sounds, could not distinguish the words.

"Tell me, oh tell me," he said, "that you are better, or I shall go frantic with self-reproach for having brought you here."

"You saved me," she replied, softly drawing her hand from beneath the clothes, and feebly extending it to him. "It will make life doubly precious."

Winifred could not catch the words, but the sweet pathos of the voice penetrated to her heart like poison.

She lay, chilled and trembling; but a low moan escaped her, that appeared for the first time to recall Evan to a sense of her presence.

He bent over the couch and made some common-place inquiry about her health, as if the peril had only been for Laura.

But the French girl's memory was now rapidly returning, and she became conscious of what she had hitherto not felt that some one shared her bed.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A CONUNDRUM constructor whose name is unfortately unknown to fame, has found out by experience that the difference between a sweetheart and a wife is almost akin to all the difference between a gold-headed cane and a wart on your nose. You carry the one around with you because you like to and the other because you've got to.

LOVER AND LORD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN ANGEL UNAWARES" "A SHOCKING SCANDAL," "SOWING AND REAPING," "PEGGY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.—[CONTINUED.]

"HOW sweet she is, Vance!" the little girl cried enthusiastically. "She has given the one thing that was wanting to make me quite content.

"No, no; do not be absurd, sir, I did not mean the pearls, of course, but a word of kindness from your own home."

"Nora was always kind and thoughtful for others," Vance said, with a sigh, his own happiness making him in some dim fashion comprehend the sharpness of his old playfellow's pain.

"Poor Nora, I wish we in turn could do something for her!"

"Who knows? Perhaps we may," Nettie said, with a sagacious nod.

The words, seriously spoken, made Vance laugh.

"My dear Nettie," he said, with his most superior air, "do you really imagine that Mrs. Vance Singleton could render Lady de Gretton any service? That would indeed be a case of the mouse and the lion!"

"Exactly so," Nettie agreed, looking up innocently into the handsome face. "Why Vance, what a singularly *a propos* quotation!

"The mouse did free the lion, you know, when the lion was caught in the toils."

The saucy little creature certainly had the best of the argument, as Vance was forced, with a grim smile, to admit.

But the smile soon faded, for he carried on the allegory in his thoughts, and remembered that from the toils in which Nora had even ceased to struggle death alone could set her free.

The next day Nettie wore her pearls at the altar, and left them in her mother's charge when the young pair started on their brief honeymoon-trip.

It was a very brief one—an elysian week across the silver Solent, and then back to hard work and homely duties.

A round of country engagements lay before them, and then that grand debut in town which was to make or mar Vance Singleton's fortune, and which, in either case, was to be the signal for breaking the news to the Bruces.

On this they were both agreed.

Nora's wedding would be over and Lord de Gretton's haughty displeasure a thing of small account.

Once they knew Nettie, Captain and Mrs. Bruce were sure to like her, the bridegroom proudly thought.

And as for Cristine—well, she would be horrified, of course.

He could not mould his life anew to please Cristine.

So they planned the course of events, hopefully and, cheerfully enough, knowing nothing of the storm-cloud gathering darkly over their innocent heads.

The end of August found them finishing a week's engagement at Stoke Vernon, the small West-Country town to which so terrible a celebrity was soon to attach.

It was the regatta week, the annual awakening of the slumberous little place, and the run on amusements of any kind was—for Stoke Vernon—tremendously great.

The queer irregularly-built town did not, of course, possess a theatre, or even a hall of any decent size or shape, and Nettie, who, on the strength of her growing popularity, was getting a little proud, was much disposed to poob-pooh the engagement.

But her husband's popularity was still in the clouds, she had a vacant week, and, even could he have spared the pounds, he could not spare the practice, so he asserted his rights as lord and master to accept the manager's offer, and Nettie, with only the mute protest of an exquisitely comical grimace, gave in, and followed him whither the guiding hand of Providence most surely led.

The work was easy in that easy-going place, and, as they had much time at their disposal, they wandered through the outskirts of the town, up the green fern-clad hills, and through the lovely overarched lanes, lounged on the broad red sands, hunted for madrepores and sea-anemones in the clear cool green pools amid the slippery boulders, sailed on the summer sea, and, as Nettie said, renewed the enchantment of the honeymoon in the oddest and most unexpected fashion.

"Are you sorry we came?" Vance asked her, with a half laugh, one morning, being so very sure what the answer would be.

"Sorry!"—the pretty girlish face, to which the fresh morning breeze gave back all the dainty coral tints the gaslight stole away, lighted all over with the energy of her answer.

"Vance, I wish we could stay here for a month—and we must go home to-morrow."

"Ah, well," he said philosophically—it is very easy to be philosophical when you lie on your back in the shade and dreamily watch the gray spiral smoke of your cigar float up in curling clouds to the far perfect blue of a Devonshire sky—"ah, well, all things must end, the brightest the soonest!

"I should say that was a poetical quotation, only I don't believe the English language supplies 'soonest' with a rhyme. We have laid in a large stock of fresh air and sunshine; we have seen all that is to be seen."

"That I deny," Nettie broke in energetically.

"There is one sight I have set my heart on seeing, Vance; and your laziness shall not stand in my way."

Vance groaned in spirit at the words, and looked with meek deprecation into his pretty tyrant's face, though all the time he knew the look was utterly wasted.

If Nettie had a fait, of which fact he felt by no means sure, it was that she was so fearfully energetic; had so little appreciation of the dolce far niente, which was the truest joy of her husband's life.

"Troubler of my tranquility," he said, with a deep sigh, "what is there you still wish to see?"

"That," Nettie said concisely; and she pointed with her forefinger up to the terraced height above, where a small pretty house gleamed marble-white against the framing darkness of the trees.

"My dear girl"—with great relief Vance dropped back in his place, nestling the back of his head comfortably in his open palms—"and Englishman's house is his castle.

"I cannot take it by storm and run the risk of being arrested as a trespasser, even to satisfy your laudable interest in your neighbors' affairs."

"Have you quite done?" Nettie asked serenely.

"Because if so, you had better dust your coat, which is covered with red sand, and come up the hill with me.

"An Englishman may show his castle, may he not, you foolish boy?"

"But this is not a castle, but a cottage," Vance pleaded forlornly.

"Exactly. It is Cliff Cottage, the marine residence of our county member, Mr. Dalmayne, and one of the show-places of the neighborhood.

"I read all that in the guide-book, Vance; so you see it must be true."

Mr. Singleton did not see; but protest was evidently useless.

He resigned himself to his fate, which was not a very hard one, after all, for, though the sun was warm, the paths were exquisitely shady, and vistas of green beauty opened on every side.

"You are good-tempered," Nettie said, with an affectionate and remorseful squeeze of the gray-clad arm, as the handsome young pair stood at the lodge gate, awaiting the answer to their modest summons.

"After all, you know, I had no business tyrannise and triumph over you like that."

Poor Nettie!

It was well she made her little apology when she did, for, after all, the triumph was not hers.

The woman who opened the gate civilly informed them that Cliff Cottage was not on view that day.

"But I understood from the guide-book that it was always open to tourists," persisted poor Nettie, with a very crestfallen look; and her husband could not repress an unmerciful grin.

"Quite right, madam; but, in the circumstances, you see——"

"I suppose that Mr. Dalmayne has returned home?" Vance interposed, thinking it time to come to the poor baffled explorer's relief.

"Oh, no, sir!" the woman said, with a surprised look, as though he had shown strange ignorance of a matter of general and engrossing interest.

"Mr. Dalmayne is still in Italy; but did you not know that he has lent the cottage to Lord de Gretton for his honeymoon? We expect his lordship and her ladyship to-day."

CHAPTER XV.

"LORD de Gretton and his lady will be down to-day."

The woman closed the gate with the words, and left the young pair staring blankly each in the face of the other.

To each the shock was great.

But to Vance it brought a sharp and stinging pain.

The thought that his little sister Nora, his pet playmate and loyal friend, was so near at hand, and yet so immeasurably distant, brought him down from his happy cloudland into a disenchanted region of uncomfortable fact.

"I wish I had seen her!" Nettie said, pausing at the brow of the steep hill to glance wistfully up at the green belt of trees and the pretty white cottage, on which the sunlight fell dazzlingly. "Shall I ever see her, Vance?"

The young man shook his head.

His honest bright young eyes were dark with pain.

Still it was hard to give up all thought of seeing Nora.

Nothing seemed more improbable than friendship between a couple of strolling players and Lord de Gretton's wife; and yet——

The young pair however had not much time for moody thought.

They were to leave Stoke Vernon by the early morning train, and travel straight to Glasgow, where their next engagement was made.

Their luggage, duly labelled with Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Vansittart's name, had been sent on before them, and they were burdened only with the ulsters, traveling wraps, and hand-bags which even the wisest of women will deem necessary.

As fate would have it, Vance grumbled a little at these superfluities when she set them out overnight.

Nettie laughingly appealed to the landlady, with whom she was at the moment settling all accounts, to say if she had one article too many, and the good woman promptly assured her she had not, adding, with that superior smile which most men know only too well and dread—

Gentlemen don't understand these things, mum. I daresay Mr. Vansittart will be glad enough you took your wraps before the day is out."

Nettie laughed, and drew her straps a little tighter as she looked over her shoulder at her lord.

The meekness of his aspect disarmed her and she only said brightly—

"Oh, you must not think him a tyrant, Mrs. Stubbs! He hardly ever grumbles; do you, Vance?

"But, when I left so many things out, I thought that maid, or dresser, with whom I made a half-engagement would have been here to carry them. It is very disappointing."

"It is indeed," the woman said sympathetically. "Little Polly—my grandchild, you know—might help; but I think the train goes at six."

"At six A. M. precisely," Vance said, with a laugh. "My dear Mrs. Stubbs, you do not suppose I really mind those things. I claim my privilege to grumble, that's all."

"And, as I weakly told her what train we start by, I have no doubt that Hesba Greer will meet us at the station, and congratulate herself on the fact that we have done all her work for her," Nettie finished, with her quaint little shrug.

And so the matter dropped, passing from their thoughts as a thing of small account then, to be recalled with strange and startling significance afterwards.

The next day, as fair and bright an August morning as ever dawned upon this sad and sin-stained earth found Vance and Nettie early astir.

Indeed a strange restlessness possessed them both.

When they had swallowed the milk and bread Mrs. Stubbs laid out in the little-sitting-room, it was still only half-past four; they had more than an hour to spare.

"Your watch was wrong, Vance," Nettie said, with comic dismay. "We cannot stay here all the time; let us run down and have a farewell peep at the sea."

Vance was nothing loath; so, softly letting themselves out, they walked down the irregular High Street, over the hills, and so down to the beach.

The wind blew fresh and cold across the open sea.

Nettie, in her trimly-buttoned ulster and close little velvet cap, did not mind the chilliness, and revelled in the salt sea-breeze.

Chatting gaily, she ran on from stone to stone, as light-hearted as any child, while her husband followed more soberly and more slowly, as became his condition.

Nevertheless he enjoyed the expedition as much as she did, and followed the springy figure with admiring eyes, until it disappeared round a projecting point of the cliff-line, where the boulders were thickest and the red sand was hardly to be seen.

"Take care, you foolish child—you may get a nasty fall!" Vance cried, in sudden fear; but the warning words had hardly left his lips; when they were terribly answered by a wild despairing cry and an agonised "Vance, Vance, for pity's sake come quickly!" in Nettie's clear shrill voice.

It hardly took him a second to throw down all that encumbered him and fly to his wife's assistance, yet in that flash of time a thousand agonising possibilities passed through his mind, a thousand scenes of horror rose before him, but not one—oh, merciful Heaven, not one, so terrible as that which met his sight!

Upon the very verge of the sea, perched on a slippery rock which every instant threatened to dislodge her, stood Nettie, with both arms flung round a slender and desperately struggling female figure.

"Vance, come! I cannot hold her any longer!" Nettie gasped: and in another second Vance stood beside her, and she slipped gently to the ground.

For the moment the young fellow thought only of his brave wife's peril, and, while his eyes turned eagerly to her, he restrained the woman's desperate struggles with unconsciously savage force.

Suddenly those struggles ceased, the head dropped back on his shoulder, the body lay an inert weight in his arms.

So sudden was the change from violent muscular action to complete repose that it nearly overbalanced him, and, but for Nettie's prompt movement, he would have fallen.

"The poor creature has fainted; she tried to kill herself! Oh, Vance, who is she?"

Nettie's terrified whisper thrilled him like an electric shock.

He lifted the prone head.

The black hair fell back from the white ghastly face.

It was Nora!

"Nora!" Vance said blankly; and he could say no more. For the moment his senses deserted him, and he thought he had indeed gone mad.

The whole thing seemed so wildly incredible.

"Nora, the courted, flattered bride of yesterday, Nora, Lady de Gretton, the desperate fugitive, this would-be suicide! It could not, could be!

"Vance!" Nettie's gentle voice broke in upon the young man's trance of horror. While he stood helplessly staring, trying vainly to understand, she had poured brandy from a flask, and, in her quiet helpful fashion, had done her best to call the wandering spirit back. "Vance, come here! What does this mean?"

With a shudder she pointed to some dark spots on the soft velvet skirt, to the stained lace round the pretty wrists, to the small cold hands, which were red with blood.

"Wash them, Vance." She turned away her head, not able to endure the terrible sight.

"She has tried to kill herself; she has been driven mad! Oh, Heaven help us all!"

She broke down in a passion of hysterical tears, a brief storm that cleared the atmosphere, and left brave Nettie free to think and act.

Vance obeyed her, in a sort of blind stupor, finding as yet no clue to the maze of horror in which his mind was lost.

Meantime, with a long gasping breath, Nora opened her eyes.

They rested on the white stern face that bent above her, wildly at first, then with a recognising glance.

"Vance," she said hoarsely—"Vance! And here! And I——"

She raised her head from Nettie's lap and looked round her, then at her dress, and then—oh, Heaven, the worldless horror of her look, the maddened gleam of the dark dilating eyes!—she threw out her arms, and would have broken into the weird wailing cry that woke the dangerous echoes once before; but Nettie placed one hand upon her lips.

"Be silent, for your own sake and ours," she said authoritatively. "We are here to save you—Vance and I."

But Nora struggled pitifully to break from the strong kind clasp.

"No, no, let me die; it is the only way!" she muttered restlessly. "Vance, they will hang me if I am found! Arthur is here, alive and well, and he—is dead—murdered!"

Vance Singleton glanced at his wife; her face was deathly white, but full of steady purpose.

She had divined already that which was slowly dawning, in all its ghastly horror, on the man's mind.

"Who is dead, Nora?" Vance asked sternly; and the answer came with a terrible promptitude that made his heart stand still.

"Lord de Gretton. Look!"—holding out her hands with a loathing gesture. "His blood is upon me—the curse of Cain! Oh, Vance, for my father's sake, for yours, for all our sakes, let me die! The is better than the hangman!"

"She is mad," Nettie said, noticing the abhorrence with which Vance drew back from this plain confession of her crime. "Vance, it may be false or true, this—this story; but, truth or delusion, we must save her, if there is yet time."

"Listen, Nora! For your father's sake, you must obey us now. We are leaving this place; you must travel with us. Remember that one word such as you have spoken here will kill your father. Do you understand me?"

Nora's wild passion had exhausted her strength by this time.

Only the unnatural glitter of the restless eyes told of the fire that burned within.

She bent her head, and stood trembling from head to foot, but made no effort to escape, while Nettie, rapidly removing her own ulster, buttoned it over the tell-tale dress which she could not touch without a shudder, placed the black velvet hat on the bare head, and tied a thick Shetland veil across the face that must needs have betrayed her.

"Take her to the station at once, Vance," she said, with an authority her husband dared not dispute.

"The things are there; it will all seem natural enough. Do not waste an instant."

"And you?"

In the whirl and confusion of the moment, with Nora's hand held tightly within his arms, and his heart throbbing in a mingled tumult of horror and pity at the contact, Vance glanced back still at the slender girl-figure bareheaded in the morning sunlight; but she only waved him on frantically.

"Go; I will follow with the things. You forget Mrs. Vansittart's maid will travel with you," she said, with a ghastly little smile. "For pity's sake, waste no time."

The walk to the station was a very short one.

It seemed to stretch on and on forever.

And on that morning, early as it was, the streets were by no means deserted; the little town was emptying fast of the visitors drawn thither by the regatta, and Vance dreaded every moment that he would encounter some chance theatrical acquaintance who would insist on pausing to bid him good-bye.

And beside that terror was the other haunting fear that Nora's frenzy would break out again.

But fortune favored—no, Vance never used that false and flippant phrase.

He reverently and humbly acknowledged that Heaven helped him in this desperate need.

He met no one.

And Nora walked beside him with an automatic obedience that saved her.

They reached the station, mingled unobserved with the boisterous, chatting, laughing crowd that waited for the cheap and nasty train, and, almost before her husband dared expect her, Nettie joined them there.

The girl's courage and forethought and self-control were wonderful.

In the brief space of time allowed her she had pinned the travelling-wrap shawl-fashion over her pretty shoulders and twisted a silk handkerchief round the soft gray hat Vance had intended to wear on the train.

Now she stood beside him, luggage-ticket in hand, consulting cheerily as to the probable delay in the train that would inconvenience them in their cross-country journey.

Brave true Nettie!

If he had not loved her before, Vance felt that he must have bowed down then in helpless admiration of the strong true heart that took up the burden under which he must needs have broken down, and nobly served and saved his miserable charge.

Not until they were safely seated in the second-class carriage—alone, as it most mercifully happened—did her nerves yield under the unnatural strain laid upon them.

Then for a second she turned faint and giddy, growing so deathly white that Vance thought she would lose consciousness, and flung his arm around her.

But she rallied in a moment, assuring him, with brave white lips, that the motion of the train had shaken her—that was all.

That was a terrible journey.

The train dragged its slow length along from little station to little station.

From station to station the pale pair never knew that the telegraph-wire had not flashed the news before them, that exposure and arrest might not await them on the platforms—shame and terror for them, shame and death perhaps for the dazed and helpless girl who sat mute, motionless, and seemingly absorbed in a trance of horror in the corner of the carriage.

At last the great junction from which they took their departure for the North was reached, and they found, to their intense relief, that their trains almost matched, and that, so far at least, the news had not preceded them.

They had gained a little breathing-space, a little time to think and act.

Night found them in Glasgow, and in the lodgings that they had providentially secured beforehand for a party of three. Once under shelter, it was comparatively easy to act, and Nettie's prompt instinct served her well.

Their new landlady was a very different person from the easy-going chatty old lady at Stoke Vernon.

A bustling slaving woman, with a house full of lodgers and hands full of work, she had neither time nor taste for gossip, and, once having shown the new-comers their rooms and heard their requirements, she was only too glad to leave them to their own devices.

She did indeed regret, with abstracted civility, that Mrs. Vansittart's sister—or was it her maid?—should fall ill just when she was most wanted.

When Nettie, with well-acted heartlessness, deplored "the whole affair" as "an awful nuisance" and "a most vexatious thing," her thoughts had so evidently traveled off into the regions of "roast and boiled," of "cold joints and hashes" that Nettie felt it safe to let the subject drop and the impatient woman go.

The week that followed will always be one hideous blurred spot in Vance Singleton's memory.

Even to themselves, Nettie and he never speak of those days, in which, move where they might, look where they would, they saw the hideous shadow of the gallows flung across their path.

The story of Lord de Gretton's murder was on every tongue.

The subject was too romantic and sensational not to catch the public fancy.

On every side they heard the name that was so terribly familiar to their ears, on every side they heard speculations as to the cause of the murder, the flight of the murderess, and marvels that as yet she had not been caught.

"The police! Oh, the police have been as wise as usual!" Vance heard a man at a street-corner observe with the easy cynicism of one on whom no responsibility rests. "As usual, they have let their game slip through their fingers, and got off scot-free!"

The answer made his fevered blood run cold.

"For a time" his companion said, with a confident laugh. "'Slow and sure,' my dear fellow; you forget the good old proverb. For my part, however clever she may be—and she is clearly crazy—I would give long odds that the murderess is caught at last."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ANIMAL VICES.—Some animals, as a class, are noted for special vices, and some individuals, no matter of what class, have individual and private vices of their own. Dogs, as a class, are quarrelsome, peacocks are proud, mules are reckless, hogs are gluttonous, foxes are tricky, opossums lie, crows steal, cats are cruel and selfish, never doing anything out of love for their masters. When they catch mice, or play even, they do it not as a benefit to us, but for their own appetite or amusement. They do not, like the dog, make sacrifices for men, and have neither faithfulness nor gratitude. While a dog watching a piece of meat will starve rather than eat it, a cat will steal or lick it when not hungry. Like a tiger, which it resembles, it resembles, it cannot be tamed or humanitarianized, whereas, a dog, like a lion, his prototype, can be. The cat, as a class, is about the meanest or morally most wicked of animals, without one redeeming feature except cleanliness. The brute kingdom is a realm in which moral inquiries are now in order.

Scientific and Useful.

BREATHING.—A man breathes about eighteen times a minute, and uses three thousand cubic feet of air per hour.

CESS-POOLS, ETC.—Dr. Laujorrois recommends potassium dichromate for disinfecting cess-pools, sewage, dissecting rooms, &c., and considers it likely to be of great use in diseases due to microbia.

SHEET IRON BOOKS.—Two books formed with sheet-iron leaves have been sent to the Amsterdam exhibition by an English firm as an illustration of the perfection to which the process of rolling sheets of iron brought. The leaves are said to be no thicker than "good-toned paper."

BEARINGS.—Speaking about bearings and friction, the Scientific American says: "In all cases the journal should give space enough for a film of oil, especially for high speeds, under which it may become heated and slightly expanded. Many a journal and boxes are injured by binding, the consequence of a too finical fit."

SWEATING.—M. Vieusse, principal medical officer at the medical hospital at Oran, states that excessive sweating at the feet, under whatever form it appears, can be quickly cured by carefully conducted friction with the subnitrate of bismuth, and even in the few cases where this suppresses the abundant sweating only temporarily it still removes the severe pain and the fedity which often accompany the secretion.

GLASS FLOORS.—In many of the business houses of Paris and especially in those of which the cellars are used as offices, glass is now being extensively employed instead of boards for flooring. At the headquarters of the Credit Lyonnais, on the Boulevard des Italiens, the whole of the ground floor is paved with large squares of roughened glass embedded in a strong iron frame, and in the cellars beneath there is, even on dull days, sufficient light to enable the clerks to work without gas.

HOOP-MAKING.—A couple of Bostonians have invented a hoop-making machine which, it is said, makes from 20,000 to 30,000 half-round hoops a day, cutting two, three, or four from a pole, as occasion requires. One of the results of the introduction of this new machine will be the utilization of ironwood saplings for hoops. This tough and almost indestructible wood, which resists the tools of the cooper, is said to be handled without difficulty by the Boston hoop-making machine.

Farm and Garden.

FEED PIGS OFTEN.—It is better to feed young pigs often than to surfeit them at one feeding. Variety aids much to the progress of the young animal, and at this season growth is more desirable than fat.

FLOWERS.—Flowers may be kept very fresh over night if they are excluded entirely from the air. To do this, wet them thoroughly, put in a damp box and cover with wet raw-cotton or wet newspaper, then place in a cool spot.

OLD VINES.—Old vines and canes are of no use to the new ones nor to the ground, and they should be cut out at any time after the cold weather sets in. Most agricultural journals are recommending that such be cut away now, but the best time for so doing is when the earth is frozen hard and stiff. You will then also have more time for so doing.

KEEP SHEEP DRY.—Someone gives the seasonable advice to keep sheep dry under foot with litter; and add that "wet feet make a sheep sad—he pines away and ceases to grow. You cannot put rubber boots on him, but you can put litter under him. This is more necessary than roofing them. A sheep thinks more of his feet than his head, and his head doesn't gather wool, either."

THE COW.—To find out whether any individual cow is a profitable member of the dairy herd or not, a separate account should be kept of her milk and butter. If much pains is taken it is not easy to tell just what the worth of a doubtful milker is. The true policy is to throw out every one which does not yield a profit and replace her with a better one. It costs just as much to feed a mean cow as a good one.

A TREE PLANTER.—A novel device for holding trees at the proper elevation and in a vertical position while being planted, is mentioned by the Scientific American. The planter has three inclined bars secured to each other at their upper ends, and connected by parallel and brace bars, forming a tripod, and provided with hanging springs having their lower ends bent forward and provided with claws for suspending the tree in exactly the required position. To the upper end of the tree inclined bars is attached a table provided with four sights, by which the planter can be adjusted from stakes at the side of the field.

AN AUTOMATIC HORSE-FEEDER.—A London paper thus describes a machine for feeding horses automatically, which has recently been invented: "This automatic horse-feeder is designed to feed any number of horses at regular times, whether an attendant is present or not. The feeder consists of two parts—a spout or shoot fixed over the manger, into which the food is placed every night, and an apparatus of which a specially adapted clock forms a part. The clock may be set for any hour, and at the time indicated the whole or one-half of the food in the chute is liberated and falls into the manger. One apparatus and clock is sufficient for any number of horses provided the stables are in a group."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 22, 1883.

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MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

There is no element that enters more largely into the happiness and general comfort of society than the disposition to make the best of what happens. Good and evil, or what we esteem as such, come to us all at different times and in various ways; but the message they bring, and the effect they produce, are chiefly determined by the way we receive them.

There are some persons who really seem to tax their powers of ingenuity to the utmost in making the worst of everything. So engrossed are they in cherishing their sorrows and recounting them to others, in dwelling upon the very worst side, and treasuring it up, lest they should forget any of its bitterness, that it is only with the greatest difficulty that they can be induced to turn at length to the future, and throw themselves into its duties and its hopes.

On the other hand, there are those who place the emphasis of their lives upon the happy side. They dwell with pleasure upon all the joys that come to them; they speak freely and gratefully of them, and thus communicate something of their own gladness to others. When failure or disappointment, bereavement or misfortune, overtakes them, though suffering as keenly and grieving as deeply as any, they do not refuse to look upon the brighter side of the cloud, they do not utterly lose heart and hope, they do not bury themselves in a selfish indulgence of sorrow, but rather strive to bury their sorrow in their own hearts, and rise with accumulated strength to the duties of the present, and the hopes of the future.

And of these latter the most important is doing good. But, as we have intimated, one of the impediments to the good we might accomplish in the world lies in the habit of drawing sharp limits between our different relations in life. It is unquestionable that there are radical differences between the obligations we owe to ourselves, to our families, to our neighbors, to our intimate friends, to our business acquaintances, to society in general, to the poor and unfortunate; but they are differences which are much oftener magnified than overlooked. The same elements need infusing into all, in order to make either one a perfect relation, and the differences are rather those of degree than of kind.

For the moment leaving ourselves out of the question, to help men and women effectually, we must lift them up to a higher plane in everything—discipline their thoughts, increase their knowledge, purify their designs, refine their feelings, cultivate their self-respect, awaken their aspirations, develop their energies, and open up to them every good and possible opportunity for self-improvement. There is nothing so potent to accomplish these things as the spirit of friendship, and the determination to make the best of everything.

Much may be done by intelligent enterprise, by well-laid plans and earnest efforts, by benevolent associations and personal oversight; but it is only when these are animated by a real affection, such as is applied in human brotherhood, that we see the true power of lifting others in successful operation.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A VERY important movement in favor of slaughter-house reform has been inaugurated in London, under the name of the London Abbatoirs Society. The objects of the society are to illustrate and teach more humane and rapid methods of killing, to cover abbatoirs, and to institute a systematic and scientific inspection.

—

THE latest fashionable craze is to have the fan form the background for a series of family portraits. A New Yorker of social distinction has introduced the idea by having her three children, all in costume, painted by an artist of note on her fan, and other ladies of equal "distinction," though lacking originality, are following suit.

—

SEVENTEEN United States Senators are worth, in the aggregate, $55,350,000. They are: Fair, of Nevada, $18,000,000; Miller, of California, $4,000,000; Sawyer, of Wisconsin, $7,000,000; Brown, of Georgia, $3,000,000; Palmer, of Michigan, $7,500,000; Sabin, of Minnesota, $2,000,000; Bowen, of Colorado, $2,000,000; Hale, of Maine, $1,000,000; Miller, of New York, $3,000,000; Don Cameron, of Pennsylvania, $5,000,000; Plumb, of Kansas; $500,000; Pendleton, of Ohio, $200,000; Sherman, of Ohio, $250,000; Van Wyck, of Nebraska, $250,000; David Davis, of Illinois, $4,000,000; Bayard, of Delaware, $100,000; McPherson, of New Jersey, $250,000.

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RETRENCHMENT being forced upon the Board of Education of Cincinnati by the Tax Commission, a reporter of that city called upon a member of the Board to ascertain what was likely to be done, and quotes him as saying that he was in favor of either cutting the principals' salary one-half or dispensing with them altogether and employing superintendents in their places.

—

A LONDON letter says: "Temperance sentiment is still spreading here, and the most encouraging sign is that the consciences of property owners are being touched. The Duke of Westminster has just announced that upon the extensive property which he controls in the city of Westminster no new licenses for public houses shall be granted, nor any leases for existing ones be renewed."

—

BRITISH postal telegraphy under Government control is a great success. Since the purchase by the Government the number of offices and length of lines in operation have more than doubled. Ten million dollars of interest on the purchase have been paid out of the proceeds, and now the rate for messages, is to be reduced from one shilling to sixpence, and all has been done without any increase of taxation.

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A WRITER in a New York paper contends that sewer-pipes can only be properly ventilated by downward draughts, produced by heat. He says: "Sewer gas is uniformly treated as if its natural tendency were to rise. But as it is constantly loaded with carbonic acid, which is heavier than air, it would seem difficult for it to do so. The carbonic acid always lies at the bottom of pits and unused wells, even when quite open to the air."

—

AFTER noting the proposal to erect a new home for the President of the United States, and to surrender the Executive Mansion to public business, a correspondent says: "Many people wonder why it costs so much to keep the Executive Mansion in good order. Colonel Rockwell says the wear and tear of the furniture exceeds that of any hotel in the country. The people to the average of five hundred a day insist upon seeing the White House. They must tread upon the carpets, and rest themselves in the tempting chairs. They must examine, with their eyes and fingers, all the upholstery and drapery. When it is remembered that this is repeated every day in the year, it will cease to be a matter of wonder that the wear is so rapid."

—

THE Superintendent of the Buffalo, N. Y., Public Schools thus closes a circular of instructions and hints to teachers: "Watch the thermometer closely, and do not allow the temperature, where you can control it, to get above 70 degrees Fahrenheit. At the middle of each session relieve their mental work by exercising the body with calisthenics, marching and music. March the pupils into the open air, when the weather will permit with safety to health. Do not allow pupils to sit with overshoes on their feet, or wraps about their bodies or throats. Primary children require much attention as they go out and come in, to see that they are properly clad. Never allow a child to sit at his or her desk showing signs of distress without at once ascertaining the cause."

—

THE Georgia Supreme Court has just rendered a decision which is of interest. The railroad managers in that State make their men sign what is called a "death-warrant," by which they agree to take all the risks of their occupation, and not try to hold their employers liable for any injury they may sustain resulting from either their own carelessness or any other cause. To make the contract more binding, the man's wife, when he has one, is required to sign an agreement that she will not sue for damages in case of accident to her husband. The widow of a brakeman who was killed, nevertheless, brought suit, and was awarded $3,600 by a jury. The case was carried to the Supreme Court, which has sustained this decision, taking the obviously just ground that, while an employee might waive his right to sue for injuries not arising from criminal negligence, the waiver in cases where there was such negligence would be contrary to public policy, and void.

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THE latest novelty at the Vienna Electric Exhibition is the electric ballet, the first representation of which proved a brilliant success. The performance is said to be most entertaining and instructive. Science, says one authority, must be danced if it shall influence the great mass of the people. That this form of scientific instruction does indeed attract the people, appears from the fact that all places were taken every time the ballet was performed as soon as the ticket-office was opened. The chief features of the entertainment are the introduction of electro magnets, dynamo machines, telegraph apparatus and telephones, which were dragged on the stage by fantastic goblins, and handled by the graceful danseuses with as much ease as if they were were especially trained in the mysteries of electricity. One of the prettiest scenes is the telegraph-polka, which is danced by two ladies costumed as telegraph boys.

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LITTLE by little our men of science are stripping the farmer's life of all the romance that poets have for ages past wove around it, and ere long the chance city loiterer in the fresh fields and pastures of our rural villages will find that neither the potato-bug nor the phylloxera has done half as much as the modern inventor in the way of destroying all that life in the country is worth living for. The Judge can no longer meet his Maud Muller as he rides down the shady lane, for, instead of the nut-brown maiden raking hay, he will find a patent machine at it; the city "weakling" can no longer gaze in admiration on the brawny-armed farmer as he guides his plow over the field, tipping it this way and that, for now his duty is simply to hold the horse's reins; no longer does the cool air of the autumn night resound with the shouts of the farmer lad and his lass dancing with joy on the barn floor because his year's work with the flail is over, for now-a-days we have a steam thresher to take its place. And we find that some one has been inventing a patent churn to relieve the dairy-maid of the only chance she gets the livelong day to allow her sweetheart to steal a kiss from her rosy lips. Truly, the land of simplicity in our forefathers' days is changing its character in this modern age.

—

IN an essay on "Women in the Fourteenth Century," we read some things which, in view of the omission of the word "obey," recently from the marriage ceremony of the Methodist Church, may be read with interest. Speaking of a "Book for Women," in the early period referred to, Dr. Wheeler says: "Wifely obedience is pushed to extremes. Three merchants laid a wager that each had the most dutiful wife. The test should be "leping" into a basin of water. Then they went to their home, one after another. The first wife refused to leap, and the husband "up with his fust, and gave her two or three grat strokes," in the presence of the other merchants. The second wife also refused, and her lord beat her with a staff. The third lady misunderstood an order to bring salt for a command to leap upon the table where they were all feasting, and, being better bred that the other wives, obeyed the order as she understood it, leaped upon the table, and brought it down with a crash. The wager was declared won, without an appeal to the basin experiment. "And so ought every good woman do the commandment of her husband, be it evil or well; for yef he bidde her thing that he ought not to do, it is his shame." Very good doctrine, for those times; but how are the mighty (husbands) fallen. A London clergyman who does not believe in offering to a bride the "alternative of slavery or perjury," and who always omits that wicked expression "obey" from the marriage ceremony, writes to a London paper about a wedding in a neighboring church, which was attended by an ominous incident. The bride being dumb when she should have uttered the dreadful word, the bridegroom bade the clergyman continue; "for," said he, shaking his fist, "we'll settle that 'ere among ourselves afterward."

IN THE GOLDEN GLOW.

ETC. D. E.

Lo! broken up and melted is the sky
Into an ocean of luminosity,
Where golden islands swim in golden light
Too vast and shining-clear for mortal sight.

And day is ebbing far; but, ere it goes,
All the deep passion of its splendor flows
About thy beauty in a rolling tide
Straight from heaven's gates, and thou art glorified.

Oh, that the burning sunset could but speak
Those burning thoughts for which all words are weak;
Could tell how my whole love to thee is given,
Quenchless and pure as very fire from heaven!

Ah! lift the wonders of that amber hair,
And turn on me thine eyes, oh, sweet and fair!
And let their pity meet the love in mine—
Pity and love akin, and both divine!

The Mermaid.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

DON'T believe in mermaids? Well, that's because you're a woman, and have lived on shore all your life. Well, if you'd like to listen, I'll tell you about Tom Barton's mermaid.

Who was she?

Why, jest the prettiest mermaid of all—the one that sot her cap, or would if she'd worn one, for Tom Barton.

Poor Tom!

You'd have liked to see him, ladies.

He was a picture of a man and a sailor, out and out, young and slim—we fatten up about forty, and that spoils us—tall and shapely, with hair that curled up tight and close, black eyes, red lips, red cheeks, and the whitest teeth.

Handsome Tom, they called him ashore, and girls went wild over him, and I knew a widder—but that ain't my story—no matter about the widder.

All the girls liked him, but he liked jest one of 'em—that was Kitty.

And Kitty wasn't pretty, not over and above what any nice girl must be.

She was a good little thing, but the women used to say they couldn't see what Tom saw in her.

Whatever it was, it was all he wanted, and the way that fellow loved her was a sight to see.

Just the way a man really ought to love a woman, true to her as steel, fond of a bit of ribbon she had worn, and ready to kiss the very ground she trod on, but not a bit jealous.

Love and faith go together—if you'll allow an old sailor to make a romantic speech for once in his life.

She wasn't Tom's mermaid—no, I haven's forgot the mermaid.

Tom saw this sweetheart of his before ever he saw the mermaid, and she came aboard, like Black-Eyed Susan, to bid him good-bye before we started for that voyage.

"Oh, Tom," says she, "how I shall think of you on stormy nights!"

"And how I shall think of you always," says he.

Then she—women have such pretty notions—took a little blue ribbon from her neck.

There was an ornament on it—two hearts joined together.

She took a hairpin out of her hair, and wrenched open the little link that bound them together.

Then she tore the ribbon in two.

It was a little slender thing—a mere thread, and she put one heart on each bit of ribbon, and gave one to Tom, and kept the other herself.

"Every night at ten o'clock I'll kiss this, Tom," said she, "and you kiss that. It will bring us close together."

Then I had to send her and the rest of 'em ashore; so we set sail, and the last thing Tom saw was Kitty's hand a waving to him from the shore.

"Cheer up, lad," says I; "you're only parted for awhile."

Says he:

"We're not parted at all; her heart is with me, and mine with her."

You never knew a sailor to be ashamed of loving a woman yet.

We leave that for land-lubbers, that don't know their value.

Well, we'd started on our voyage, you see, and we were out in mid-ocean; it was Tom's watch.

He was sitting alone thinking and thinking, as you do of a quiet moonlight night at sea, when suddenly he heard a kind of singing—a sort of chanting, rather, as it seemed, down in the water.

We had no lady passengers, but it sounded like a lady's voice—pretty, soft and sweet, and it startled him.

"What can it be?" says Tom.

And then he found it was over the side, and he began to suspect the truth, and looked down into the water; sure enough, there she was.

Who?

Why, the mermaid, of course.

She was the handsomest of her sort.

Her arms were soft and pinkish.

Her eyes—well, her eyes were a sort of green, like emeralds, and her lashes were two inches long.

Her hair floated out upon the water, and she wore a sort of vest of white silk, trimmed with pearls, and pearls on her neck and arms, and about her waist, and in her ears.

She was lovely, floating there on the water, and smiling up at Tom.

Tom couldn't help looking at her and listening to her.

She was singing the prettiest song about the sailor boy she loved, and how she had a cave for him down under the water, where there was no work, no cold, no hunger, no storms—nothing but blue sky and kisses, and where Time would stop, and he should never grow old—never.

And Tom knew she meant him.

He wasn't a vain fellow, but he knew he was the handsomest man on shipboard, and every sailor knows the mermaids always lay their snares for the handsomest man in the vessel.

"No you don't, my girl," he says to himself. "Coral caves and pearls, and all that, are indeed pretty, and you are prettier, but——"

Then, just as as he was speaking, he began to feel his mind go.

He turned giddy, and something seemed to draw him to the side of the vessel, closer and closer, and all he could see was the mermaid's face—all he could think of was her song.

And we don't any of us know what might have happened only that I came along jest then.

I saw him staggering as if he was intoxicated.

I saw his eyes fixed over the vessel's side, and I looked over, too, and saw the mermaid.

And then I jest grabbed Tom by the collar, and I shook my fist at the mermaid, and says I:

"Go away, marm; go away."

And she went.

She knew it was no use staying any longer then.

But we knew she'd come back.

A mermaid is the most persevering creature in the world.

Tom was a very handsome fellow, as I've told you.

He was all dripping with cold perspiration, and shaking from head to foot when he spoke to me at last.

"Captain," says he, "bless you! You've saved me from that critter. If you hadn't come along, I should have been under water by this time."

"I think so, too," I said.

"I felt there was no help for me. I was drawn to her, just as if she were a magnet and I a bit of steel."

"Jest so."

"I wanted to go, too," resumed Tom; "I, that have a true sweetheart at home, to be drawn to the sea by a fishy thing like that. What would Kitty say to me?"

"Kitty would know, as I do," says I, "that it's the mermaid's art—a power they have over sailors, such as cats have over birds. And it's because you're the handsomest man aboard. You can't help that, of course."

"She'll be after me again, won't she?" says he.

"Certain," says I.

"Hang it!" says he, "I wish I was as plain as a pikestaff, then. I've a mind to ruin my looks in some way. Kitty'll love me as well. Captain, if that mermaid comes after me again, I may give in. Hadn't I better do something to myself to put an end to it?"

"Well, no Tom," says I; "I don't advise that; there ain't any need. I'll stand by you. I'll keep a watch for the mermaid, and you needn't be afraid."

And so I did.

Night after night the mermaid came after Tom.

Didn't she hate me!

I could see the hate flash in her emerald-colored eyes.

But she kept coming back.

It wasn't often that any mermaid saw such a fellow as Tom.

Well, we kept the secret to ourselves, we two, and Tom never talked to anyone but me; but he told me that every time she came it grew harder and harder to think of anything else, and that now he found himself thinking even when she wasn't there, how handsome she was, and how pleasant it would be to live in the coral caves.

"I know I'm going mad captain," said he; "I know that mermaid's magic has upset my brain; but what will be the end of it?"

I couldn't tell myself.

But at last we came in sight of land, and a mermaid generally leaves a ship by that time.

Our mermaid left, so I thought, and Tom grew happy again—the same bright young fellow he had been, and I left off watching him.

But I left off a little too early, as you'll see.

We were on the coast of Ireland, and it was bright, pleasant weather.

Moonlight nights, and just the fresh sea-breeze to cool them.

Nothing Tom liked so much as to wander along the shore, smoking his pipe and thinking of home.

He bought a lot of presents for Kitty, and Kitty was all he talked about.

He never looked at one of the pretty pink and white girls the other sailors were wild over.

Never once.

The plain little face at home blotted them all out.

It wasn't plain to him, d'ye see; the face a man loves can't be.

And so, one night, he was sitting on a rock looking across the ocean, and saying to himself—

"Over there's my Kitty, thinking of me—maybe, looking at that very moon," when all of a sudden, soft, sweet, and strange, came to his ears that song he'd so often heard at sea—the mermaid's song.

He tried to rise and run away.

He could not stir.

He looked down into the water.

There she was, close to him—smiling up at him.

The pearls gleamed on her arms.

The golden hair floated out upon the little rippling waves.

She stretched her hands towards him with soft loving movements, as though she drew him to her breast, and she sang her song of love down in the coral caves.

And he felt her drawing him towards her by that magic of hers.

I was nowhere near.

There was no one to help him.

Slowly he forgot everything but her face—her bewildering, voluptuous face.

He bent towards her.

Just then the clock, in the church tower began to strike.

One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten!

And Tom, in a kind of dream counted it, and he knew it was the hour when Kitty bade him kiss the half of her little golden heart, and in a sort of dream, remembering her even while the mermaid drew him faster and faster towards her and the sea, he clutched blindly at the bit of blue ribbon on his bosom, and lifted the heart to his lips.

"Kitty, Kitty," he said "Kitty!"

And then, then, just as she kissed her half of the heart away in dear old England, just at that moment he kissed the half she had given him

And then, then, ladies, that mermaid stopped singing.

There was a charm in Kitty's golden heart, and in Kitty's own heart, that crossed the ocean that moment on a kiss that destroyed the power of hers.

She stopped singing and looked at Tom in a wild sort of way, and then she lifted herself in the sea, so that he saw the scaly half of her that she had always hidden before, and plunged head foremost into it.

Kitty had saved him.

He staggered into my cabin half an hour after, white as a ghost; but he knew the mermaid was gone for good.

She never came again.

She knew that a man about whose life the love of a good woman is entwined is safe from mermaids, at least, so long as he remembers it.

And Tom had remembered, though not a bit too soon.

She Didn't Care.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

SIX bits for a turkey! Dear, dear, but that's too much!" declared the widow Wilson, as she pinched her rather meagre pocket-book, and cast a longing look at a plump, fat turkey in the village store. "To-morrow's Christmas Day to be sure, but I reckon I'll hev to get along with a chickin this time, for I must git sugar an' currants for the mince pie, an' cranberries fur sauce. Thank goodness, I've got potatoes and turnips, anyhow an' that'll do fur me an' Gilly."

Gilly was a neighbor's little girl, who stayed with the widow to help do the work.

"I would ask Sarah Jane to dinner," pursued Mrs. Wilson, as she trudged home with her purchases, "only she'd sniff at hevin' chickin fur dinner; but goodness knows, I'm thankful to git that!"

The chicken was duly inspected by Gilly, who soon got over her disappointment at not having a real turkey.

"I've brung ye a letter, Mrs. Wilson," he exclaimed, fumbling in the pockets of his overcoat. "There! Maybe it's from some o'yer folks in the city."

Mrs. Wilson broke the seal in surprise.

"Sure enough!" she exclaimed. "It's from my aunt Mariar. 'I want you to come an' spend Christmas with me,' she says. 'Sence the bank bu'sted up with my money in it, I hain't seen anything of my kin-folks, an' I feel kind of lonesome like. I wunt promise you turkey fur dinner; but ef you kin take pot-luck, come along. I've asked Sarah Jane, too.'"

"Will you go?" asked Gilly.

"Course I will! An' I'll take the roast chickin an' mince pies along, an' a pone o' light bread, too. Goodness knows I don't want to be no expense to aunt Mariar. I'll borry Mrs. Mugford's basket to carry 'em in. Poor aunt Mariar! I reckon she does want to see some of her own kin, an' I'll go, if she did get mad as hops at me fur marryin' Tom instead of Cousin Bartholomew. I'll show her I'm willin' to let bygones be bygones, and make up friends ag'in."

And while Gilly ran over to borrow the covered basket, the widow's thoughts flew over the bygone days.

"I might have married cousin Bartholomew, and been happier than I was with him, too, if I hadn't made him jealous just for fun, and then got too spunky to own up. Well, well! what's done can't be helped now."

And the widow sighed as she turned to baste the browning chicken, and put a flaky-crusted pie into the oven.

She was a good-looking woman still, with plump, rosy cheeks, and eyes as black as sloes.

"I wonder, now, if Sarah Jane'll go?" she soliloquised. "Reckon I'll jest run over an' take her that sage she wanted fur seasoning, an' find out if she's a-goin'."

Sarah Jane was the widow's cousin.

"No!" she snapped, biting a raisin in two as if she was conferring a favor on it. "I ain't a-goin' a step. Aunt Mariar never keered to see her kin-folks when she was well off, an' now't she's poor they don't keer to see her! An' fur my part," added Sarah Jane, "I shan't never forgive her, anyhow, fur makin' trouble a-tween me an' cousin Bartholomew. If it hedn't a-been fur her we might a-married long ago."

The widow's cheeks grew redder than usual at this assertion, for she knew cousin Bartholomew had been her lover, but when Sarah Jane took a notion in her head, "all the king's horses and all the king's men" couldn't get that idea out again.

Sarah was undeniably an old maid, but the widow had serious doubts as to whether aunt Mariar had any hand in shaping her adverse destiny.

Christmas morning dawned bright and clear, but "cold as blue blazes," as Farmer Mugford said, as he hitched his horses at the cottage gate once more, and went in to warm his hands and wait for the widow, who was to ride to the station with him.

"Want this here basket tuck along?" he asked, good-naturedly, while Mrs. Wilson settled her bean-catchers, and added a little starch to her face, to hide the faint traces of crows'-feet that lurked in the corners of her eyes.

"La, yes," returned the widow and tripped out to the wagon while her escort followed with the basket.

* * * * * * * *

An old lady, in a neat, but faded dress, sat looking eagerly from the window of a house in St. Louis.

"I do wonder if they'll come?" she muttered, uneasily to herself. "I think Sarah will. She allus seemed fond of me; but Felicia had a temper of her own, and as fur nephew Bartholomew, of course he'll never forgive what I said to him when he was so contrairy."

"Oh, yes, he will Aunt Maria!" cried a hearty voice, as Bartholomew himself burst in, good-natured and manly and quite youthful-looking for his forty odd years. "And I've saved up a little money, too, aunt; so you shan't ever know want again, if you have lost your fortune. And here's my wife, that is to be," he added, leading in a plump-cheeked, rosy woman, in a Mother Hubbard cloak and a poke bonnet, with lilac ribbons.

"Why, it's—it's Felicia! gasped Aunt Maria, astonished, while the widow's black eyes danced with delight.

"Of course it's Felicia," explained cousin Bartholomew. "I met her on the train, and she's got the Christmas dinner along, already cooked. We are all going to eat it right here, and then have the wedding, and go a-house-hunting afterwards. For this house is rather small for two families," he added, with a glance at the barely furnished room.

"But there is no need of house-hunting," smiled aunt Maria. "My carriage will be here before long, and my house is big enough for us all."

"Your carriage!," they stammered.

"Yes, of course. Thank goodness, I ain't as poor as Job's turkey yet, if I did lose a few thousand when the bank broke. And I mean to leave it all to you two when I die. I shan't leave Sarah Jane anything, for not coming to see me when she thought I was poor," she added emphatically.

And instead of roast chicken for her Christmas dinner, the widow Wilson partook of a bountiful repast of turkey stuffed with oysters.

* * * * * * *

"Why couldn't aunt Mariar her said she was a-goin' to invite cousin Bartholomew?" grumbled Sarah Jane, when she heard the story. "If she hed, I would hev gone, too, and tuck some vittles and other truck along, an' mebbe I'd hev got him. But it's just like aunt Mariar, an' I believe Felicia knew it all the time too. I see her cheeks a-getting red when I was talking about cousin Bart. Felicia allus was as artful as a fox anyhow."

But the newly-made Mrs. Bartholomew was too happy to care what Sarah Jane said, or anybody else.

The Lost Baby.

BY HENRY FRITH.

"WELL, good-bye," said Mrs Jobson, "and come to see us soon. I've had a delightful visit. I bade good-bye to grandpa, didn't I? Kiss the baby for me. My good man that hamper is to go into the carriage. Fasten the lock, and bring the key to me. Well, good-bye again."

And Mrs. Jobson stepped into the coach after the hamper, which contained those things which would not go into the trunk.

"Remember me to the Wilsons," shouted Uncle James.

"You hope there won't be a collision?" cried Mrs. Jobson. "Why, dear me, how you scare me!"

"I didn't say that," yelled Uncle James. "I said remember me to the Wilsons."

"Be sure to kill some of us? Of course it would," said Mrs. Johnson, who, to the best of our belief, had misunderstood every word that was said to her during her visit, though she was hard of hearing.

"Well, we really ought always to be prepared for anything, and I hope I am."

And the carriage drove off, and the Jones family went indoors, and Mrs. Jones, the mother of an infant, who, for its age—four months—was the most beautiful accomplished, charming, and good-tempered creature known, proceeded to the nursery at once.

The nurse being absent, the baby had for once been left in the care of its great-grandpapa, a venerable gentleman of eighty, who had been seen religiously shaking it [illegible] down with the regularity of machinery.

the last private view taken of the pair by the baby's anxious mother.

Now grandpapa sat reading his paper, and no baby was to be seen.

Mrs. Jones glanced bedward and cradleward.

Both resting places were empty.

She fancied that she knew that none of the family had the child, and a little nervous chill ran up her back.

"Grandpa," she cried, quite sharply, "where is baby?"

"She went to sleep beautifully, my dear," said grandpa, complacently, "and I put her down somewhere."

He also glanced at the bed, and at the cradle, and then slowly about the room.

"I don't know exactly just where I put her, but on some kind of couch or cradle," he said, slowly; "and it certainly was in this room."

But, wherever it was, baby was not to be found; and after a frantic search of the premises, the terrible fact that baby was missing was conclusively arrived at.

Mamma fainted.

Papa hurried to the station house.

Aunt Maria went into hysterics, and Uncle James rushed wildly along the streets, asking all the strangers whom he met if they had seen a baby four months old, in a long white dress, with a coral around its neck, go by.

It was really a terrible thing that had happened to the Joneses, and if they temporarily lost their senses, who can wonder at it?

Suppose your baby was stolen?

Some old bachelor may ask, who would steal a baby?

But the thing has been done, and what has been done may be done again.

And how else could a baby, unable as yet to walk, vanish in this dreadful way?

Meanwhile, quite unconscious of the trouble which had befallen her relatives so soon after her departure, Mrs. Jobson was driven to the pier whence the boat she desired to take started daily.

It already lay at the dock, and its hands were hurrying the baggage on board.

Two of them seized Mrs. Jobson's trunk at once.

"And this hamper is mine," said the old lady; "can't you take that at the same time, and save me the trouble of watching it any longer? It's very light."

One of the men put his hand out toward the handle of the hamper as she spoke, touched it, then paused.

"Got a cat in there, ma'am?" he asked.

"What?" said Aunt Jobson.

"I say, got a cat in there?" answered the man, in a stentorian bellow.

"A cat?" cried Mrs. Jobson. "No, of course not."

"Then what have you got in it?" said the man.

"None of your business," said Mrs. Jobson.

"But I say it is," said the man. "Just listen, Sam. There's a young 'un in there, as sure as I'm a living man. Just listen."

"So there is," said Sam.

"Why don't you take the hamper on board?" said Mrs. Jobson.

"'Cause I won't, that's all," said the man. "Cappen—I say, cappen."

The captain, who was hard by, turned and advanced.

"What's the matter?" he said.

"This old party has got a baby in that basket thing," said the man, "and I'm not going to be hauled into a thing like that."

"There is a baby in the hamper, by Jove!" said the captain.

And meanwhile everybody but Mrs. Jobson heard piteous wails proceeding from the hamper.

She for her part heard nothing until, with a voice he might have used in a gale at sea, the captain demanded her keys.

"My keys?" cried the irate old lady. "No, indeed! You can't play such a trick as that on me. I know what thieves are very well. My keys, indeed!"

"Very well," said the captain. "My time is short. I must be off in ten minutes. I'll give you over to a policeman."

"Me to a policeman?" cried Mrs. Jobson. "No, I'll give you to one! Here! Police!"

But not only the captain of the boat and the bystanders, but the three guardians of the peace, who just then appeared upon the scene, heard the shrieks that came from the hamper.

Public opinion was divided, but only as to whether Mrs. Jobson intended to steal the child or to murder it.

That there was a child in the hamper everyone knew but the old lady herself, and despite her prayers, entreaties, and menaces, two of the policemen took the hamper between them.

One offered his arm to poor Mrs. Jobson, and they proceeded in ignominious procession to the station house, followed by the tag-rag and bobtail of the town.

There, Mrs. Jobson having been despoiled of her keys, the hamper was opened, and from its nest on the top of a pile of linen was lifted a very red, very moist, very tearful, furiously indignant infant, in a white dress and embroidered shawl, and a red coral necklace.

Mrs. Jobson's ears were dull, but her eyes were as sharp as ever.

She gazed, uttered one awful shriek, then another, and finally went off into hysterics, which would have been harrowing enough in private life, but which produced no effect whatever at a station house, where every member of the gentler sex who was brought in indulged in them to a degree that made poor Mrs. Jobson's efforts in that line quite mild and ineffectual.

One of the policemen, however, being young and new to the force, remarked that he "had a mother himself," and brought her a glass of water, upon which an elderly and hardened officer remarked, "Gammon!" and a sage at a desk requested that there should be no more nonsense, and that a charge should be made at once.

Mrs. Jobson did not hear what was said, but she knew herself under arrest.

She had seen a mysterious infant removed from her baggage, and she felt that for some reason she was in danger of imprisonment.

Never having been in a station house before, visions of an underground cell, chains, and a morning execution, rushed through her mind.

Probably the real picture of a dirty room, destitute of chairs, and already occupied by some inebriated female, would not have consoled her greatly; and with a wilder shriek than she had yet uttered, she threw the half-empty tumbler of water into the air, and became spasmodic.

Nobody was in the least affected but the baby, who believing the performance to be gotten up for its particular amusement, stopped crying and began to crow, as it sat bolt upright in the arms of the very tallest and broadest policeman present.

Meanwhile, preparations were being made to convey Mrs. Jobson into the interior of the premises, and things were looking very badly for that poor lady, when the door opened, and a man's face, pale with suspense and suffering, was thrust in.

"I'm here again, you see," said a voice, quite flattened by misery. "Has anything been heard of my baby? His mother begged me to mention that she has been vaccinated on the left arm—high—so that she can wear short sleeves. I hope you ——"

But looking round, the speech came to an end.

A cry of joy completed it, and the man rushed forward and snatched the baby from the policeman's arms, and stood shaking from head to foot with his effort to keep the tears back.

A useless one; for in a moment they pattered down hot and heavy on the little, round, bald head of that comical, useless, precious thing that he pressed against his breast.

The man was Jones—the child was the Joneses' missing baby.

"So that's your child, eh?" said the grim personage at the desk. "Well, it's lucky you've found it. The old female yonder was carrying it off in a clothes-basket. I suppose you'll make a charge against her. Do you know her?"

Jones stepped forward, and saw to his astonishment his old Aunt Jobson.

She also opened her eyes and saw him.

"Oh, Charles! Charles!" she cried. "Oh, thank Heaven, you've come to save me! I'm taken up! I'm arrested! They're going to do something dreadful to me! They took a baby out of my clothes-hamper, like that juggler, you know, that got cats out of empty hats! I feel as if I was in a fairy tale! I'm going crazy! Save me, Charles; save me!"

"I will, auntie," said Jones. "I know just how it happened."

Then he explained to all present how the clothes-hamper, with the cover up, had been standing in the nursery.

How baby's great grandpapa, not being used to the care of infants, had laid the sleeping child in what he supposed to be a new-fashioned cradle.

How, afterwards, the lid had fallen shut.

How Aunt Jobson had locked it without looking in.

How, being deaf, she had not heard the infant's cries when it awakened, and he explained to Aunt Jobson that this was the baby she had so often said was the image of its papa, though she had not recognized it when produced from her hamper.

Nobody believed him.

The officer at the desk said he had a mind to send them both before a magistrate, but, that though all this was very suspicious, they might go this time.

They were only too glad to go.

Jones knew what agonies of suspense those at home were enduring, and bewildered Mrs. Jobson fled as from the presence of the Inquisition.

And there was rejoicing over the Joneses' baby at home; and great grandpapa saved himself from a scolding by predicting that one who had lived through so much, must have been intended by Providence for a splendid destiny.

THE announcement by a New York photographer that one of the attractions of his Winter display will be the production and sale of portraits of ladies celebrated for their beauty and prominent in society, leads the *Sun* to say: "This can hardly be looked upon by right-minded persons as a move in the right direction. Whatever may be the custom among the English nobility, who in these days are a class seemingly privileged to outrage propriety and set modesty and decorum at defiance, the daughters of America would hardly care to advertise their charms and parade their likenesses in shop windows, side by side with actresses, criminals, and notoriously objectionable characters. The day has gone by when any special interest attaches to a "professional beauty," even in the country where the offensive term originated, and in our free and breezy atmosphere women, it is to be hoped, can be beautiful, charming and attractive without being objects for public comment and inspection."

My Portrait.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

I'LL never, never speak to you again, John Jennings," said Rose Atwood, indignantly.

John Jennings was myself.

Rosie Atwood, beside being a pretty girl, was my promised wife.

The cards were ordered.

The cake was under way—a twenty pound lump of indigestion, with a whole swarm of sugar Cupids and roses built on top of it.

I had even seen her in her wedding-dress, something that looked like a glorious snow storm of white silk, tulle, and flowers.

And here she was, telling me to my face that she would "never, never speak to me again—never."

I rubbed my eyes, and pinched myself, to make sure that it was not an active fit of the nightmare, after the lobster salad we indulged in at the close of the opera last night.

"Rosie," said I, "you're crazy.

"No, I'm not," said she, behind her pocket handkerchief. "But you're a flirt—a mean, miserable, male coquette. Go away. Here's your ring. I never want to see you or it again."

And the little diamond twinkled bewilderingly at me, as she flung it toward my feet.

"What have I done?" demanded I, gaining courage from the exigencies of the position. "Rosie, I insist upon some reason for this very unaccountable conduct."

"You've been corresponding with Nina Southwick. You've been sending her your photograph," hysterically wailed my bride-elect. "Go away, you false, vile man."

"I don't know Nina Southwick from Eve," I protested. "I haven't any idea what you are talking about."

"How dare you deny it," said Rosie, "when I saw it with my own eyes? It was a feigned hand, to be sure, but there was no feigning the photograph. Mary Green saw it, and Mary told me, and Mary brought Miss Southwick here, and she showed me the portrait herself. So there now."

"Mary Green is a meddling old maid," cried I, nearly distracted.

"But Nina Southwick isn't. Nina is a pretty giggling miss of sixteen—just the one to take a gentleman's eye," said Rosie. "But I didn't think it of you, John, after all your vows of eternal constancy and never-changing love."

"Nina Southwick may be as pretty as Hebe," protested I, "but I solemnly swear to you that I never set eyes on her in my life."

"Don't perjure yourself," said Rosie. "Remember your precious soul. I dare say you can argue very finely, but you can't make me disbelieve the evidence of my own senses."

"Won't you let me plead for myself, Rosie? Won't you listen to me?"

"No, I won't," said Rosie. "I won't, I won't."

And she ran out of the house with two little dimpled hands at her ears.

I went home with Rosie's engagement ring wedged as far as it would go on the little finger of my left hand, feeling very much as if the world had made a sudden revolution, and turned everything upside down.

"I don't know who Miss Southwick possibly can be," quoth I to myself; "but she's done for me, whoever she is. Nina Southwick. I never heard the name in my life. But Rosie is in earnest, that's plain enough. I wonder what it all means?"

I sat staring at my fire, very low spirited, indeed.

And small wonder.

An hour ago I was a happy individual, with the wedding-day close at hand—now I was nothing more than a jilted lover, with my sweetheart mortally incensed at me, and all for no possible fault of my own.

"I don't know what I shall do," said I, half aloud, "unless I find out this Miss Southwick by some hocuspocus or another, and ask her what Rosie can possibly mean. There's some mistake. Of course there is, if I could only lay my finger on it.

I was sitting thus, with my head in my hands, and my elbows resting on my knees, when there came a tumultuous knocking at the door, and in rushed my old chum, Dick Arnould.

"Hallos," bawled Dick, nearly wringing my hand off in the boisterous cordiality of his greeting. "Wish you joy, old chap. When's the happy day? When will you introduce me? But what's the matter? Neuralgia, or toothache? Brandy's good for that—or if she don't like the smell of it in your breath, try Rose drops."

"It isn't that," said I, gloomily. "Dick, I'm glad you've come in just now. I need a friend to confide in."

"Eh?" said Dick, rumpling up his hair until he looked like an Indian.

"She has thrown me off for ever."

"No," cried Dick.

"It is too true. And all on account of one Nina Southwick."

"What," roared Dick, jumping up. "Miss Southwick?"

"Yes. And what's the best of it, or rather the worst of it, I don't know Nina Southwick from Queen Victoria."

"I do," said Dick, tugging uneasily at his carrot-colored moustache.

"Perhaps," said I, with a gleam of hope, "you'll introduce me, then. Because she may be able to help me see daylight through this curious muddle?"

"Old fellow," said Dick, "I didn't mean it. But don't kick me downstairs—it's all my fault."

"You are mad," said I.

"You will be when you hear it all," said Dick, with a dolorous effort at a smile. "I sent that photograph."

"What photograph?"

"Yours."

"You sent it?"

"Yes."

"To Miss Nina Southwick?"

"Yes, to Miss Nina Southwick. And I'll tell you how it came to pass. I corresponded with her just for fun. She's a cousin of Prosper's, who has the law office next to mine. She wrote to me for my portrait. I'm a homely sort of lubber, at my best, and my photographs look seven degrees worse than I do. Yours was sticking in my looking-glass frame, so I just sent that instead. It was only for a lark, I give you my word."

I looked reproachfully at him.

"It's a lark that will last me my lifetime," said I. "She has shown it to some old catamaran, who has shown it to Rosie—and Rosie very naturally concludes I have been playing a double game all this time."

"Now, look here," pleaded honest Dick, "things are not as bad as all that. I'll go to her myself, and tell her exactly how it happened."

And Dick Arnould was as good as his words.

Rosie Atwood, as he afterwards reported to me, was a Niobe, all in tears, when he sent up his card, with "Upon Important Business," written in pencil underneath the "R. Arnould."

"She said at first," stated Dick, "that she never would forgive me. But she thought better of it afterwards, when I told her I knew I deserved nothing short of a term of years in prison. But I told her, too, I'd cut my right hand off to serve you, if the worst should come to the worst. And then she cried and laughed, and said, if you could forgive me, she would."

And even while Dick was telling his tale, a pink, three-cornered note from Rosie was brought me.

"Dearest John," it said, "If you can ever pardon me those cruel words, come to me to-night.

"R. A."

Of course I obeyed the little tear-blotted missive.

Of course there was a general "kissing and making up."

And, of course, Rosie vowed she would never, never doubt me again.

"But you must own yourself, darling," said Rosie, while I fitted on the diamond ring again, "that I had good reason this time."

And I answered her with the lover's best argument—a kiss.

HOW JAPANESE POP THE QUESTION.—When a young man has been "scotched" by an almond-eyed beauty he ties a branch of a species of mistletoe, to the door of her house, which, if allowed to wilt and die, implies that he is rejected, but if it be taken in and done for, so also is the young man. To give proof of her sincerity in the premises the young lady at once blackens her teeth. After a marriage has been agreed upon, the friends of the contracting parties meet and settle the question of dowry, and appoint a day for the meeting of the lovers and the day for the wedding.

Consumption of the Lungs.—A Case of Rapid Development Accompanied by Severe Hemorrhage.

The following testimonial to the prompt action of Compound Oxygen in a case of rapidly developing Consumption of the lungs, is given by the writer in order, as he says, that by means of its publication, "some afflicted one may be induced to try your very simple and beneficial remedy."

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My Dream.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

WHEN people talk of dreams and portents, I always think of that night when, waking from slumber, I hid my face in my hands, in as much terror of the darkness as though I had been a child who feared ghosts, and fancied one in every corner

I had gone to sleep, as usual, after a very pleasant evening.

I had gone to sleep thinking of Charles; my Charles, who was away from home, between whom and myself the water rolled, but from whom I had received that day a cheerful letter promising a return to his "little wife."

Nothing had happened that day that was not pleasant.

My cousin Clarissa had been to see me, and had brought me some little presents.

A seal, with the head of a veiled woman on it, in intaglio, a pretty jet set, earrings and pin.

We had had music and pleasant talk.

I had fallen asleep like an infant, and yet this is the dream that came to me; and that aroused me from my slumber, in a condition worse than any to which mere physical pain could have reduced me.

I thought I had retired just as I actually had.

I remembered where I placed the ornaments I wore.

Into the two small bows I put the ribbon from my hair, the scarf from my neck; just where I hung my silk evening dress, and the wrapper that I took out for the morning wear.

It was all as natural as possible, only that in my dream I had found my white wrapper trimmed with black ruffles and had wondered at it.

Then it seemed to me that instead of sleeping I remained awake, and that I heard the clock strike slowly, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve.

And had said to myself—

"It is as slow as a funeral bell."

And then I had seen the door of my room partially.

Not the door on to the landing, but one into an adjoining room.

A sliding door which moved very noiselessly.

"Who is there?" I cried.

There was no answer.

"Who is there?" I cried again.

No word was spoken in reply, but I now saw a figure, tall, and slender, and draped in black, standing between the half open doors.

Its face was veiled, but one of its hands was uncovered and was hidden in the folds of the drapery which it held up against its bosom.

In dreams the most unusual things do not surprise us.

I was not startled by the presence of this strange figure, but merely anxious concerning its errand.

"Why do you come so late?" I asked.

There was no reply.

"I expected it this morning," I said, and then a terror began to creep over me.

"You wear black," said I; "you are to wear white instead, and then the figure drew the concealed right hand from its bosom, and exhibited a letter which it held toward me.

"A letter!" I cried. "Let me see it."

And then the thing advanced, trailing its black robes over the carpet, and dropped the letter into my hands.

It had a black border, and a black seal with a death's head on it.

I gave a scream, and awoke faint, ill, a cold dew on my forehead, and a horror for which there are no words at my heart.

Of course, it is easy to laugh at me as a coward, but one who has suffered this sort of agony will know that it is more vivid while it lasts, than any other sort of terror.

I suffered this until morning.

As I had good health, a fine constitution, and no superstitions, the day-light soon drove away my horror.

I spent the morning with Clarissa, who was a light-hearted creature, and I was careful not to speak of my dream, I desired to banish it from my thoughts.

I believed I had done so, when another pleasant evening closed.

But scarcely had I dropped asleep when again the sliding doors rolled back, again the veiled face appeared between them, and the letter was presented.

This time, however, I did not take it.

"Who is it from?" I asked

The figure only shook its head.

"It may not be for me," I cried. "Oh, perhaps it is not for me."

The figure turned the letter over and showed me my own name and address written across the envelope.

"Give it to me then," I screamed. "Let me know the worst."

But the veiled woman had snatched it from me and hidden it in her bosom, and again I heard the clock strike one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve hours after mine.

My pale face and [illegible] proved [illegible] morning.

I should have [illegible] but I kept my dream to myself.

Of course I was [illegible] terror, but so kindly that I [illegible]

"Nightmare [illegible] dream," said [illegible] dreams [illegible] that I was [illegible] more [illegible] after too much [illegible]

not come to be hung yet, and never expect to.'

"And one is never warned of trouble," said Clarissa, "it always comes most unexpectedly."

And again I grew more like myself, and again slept, with no anticipation of redreaming my dream.

But it came with redoubled horrors.

For this time when the veiled figure had held out the letter, and I had said to her, "Perhaps it may not be for me," she had not returned it to her bosom; she had opened it and spread the white sheet before me, and on it I had seen written three words, the most terrible to me of any that could have been written—Charles is dead.

The morning found me too ill to rise, and Clarissa sat at my side, trying to comfort me and coaxing me to drink some tea, her unfailing panacea for all nervous attacks.

She begged to send for a physician, but I would [illegible]

"There [illegible] that I know of, for having been frightened to death," I said trying to laugh.

"I think there is in the homeopathic," she had answered. "If not, it is the only thing left out."

But I could not pretend to be light-hearted any longer.

"Oh, Clarissa," I said "I [illegible] is in some great trouble—that he is very ill—that I am to be a widow."

"Oh, don't be silly,' cried Clarissa. "I——" but she paused.

A loud ring sounded through the house.

"What is that?' I cried.

"Only the bell," said she.

"It is the postman," said I, hiding my head.

"Very likely," said she. "He often comes here, does he not?"

Then we heard foot ascending the stairs—someone entered the next room.

The sliding door moved.

Maggie thrust her head in at a small aperture.

"Missus better?" said she.

I shook my head.

"Sorry," said Maggie. "Shan't I make some tea for"

I shook my head again.

Maggie paused.

"Missus," she said, slowly, "here's a letter come for you. It's got a black border."

She drew her hand from behind her, and held it towards me.

It was a large, long envelope, and it had a black border an inch wide.

I saw my name written across it, just as I had seen it in my dream.

"Oh, Clarissa," I cried; It has come true my vision has come true. Charles is dead."

Then I fainted.

When I came to myself I was saturated with cologne-water, and as ill as I have ever had the misfortune to be in my life; but I knew Clarissa would not call me "You little fool," if the letter had been what I believed it to be, for she held it open in her hand.

In a few minutes I managed to read it for myself. These were its contents—

"Bivins and Co., dealers in mourning goods, beg to call the attention of the ladies generally to their exceedingly fine stock of [illegible]

At that moment I would have consigned Bivins and Co, to the tomb, cheerfully, and without remorse.

They had nearly killed me.

Of course Charley came home safe and sound, and, of course, I felt ashamed of myself; but I insist upon it that it was a logical dream.

For the benefit of those who dream dreams, and see visions, I will explain its occurrence.

It is very simple.

You can always explain a dream by recalling every event of the preceding day.

That I should have dreamed of a letter was natural, at a time when I was living upon letters from my absent husband.

The two gifts that Clarissa had brought were, if you remember a set of jet ornaments and an intaglio seal.

The jet gave the color to the letter, the seal a suggestion.

The head engraved upon the latter was veiled, thence the veiled face of the woman.

The words I had spoken to the figure—"Why do you come so late?" and "I expected you this morning," I had actually spoken to Clarissa, whom I had hoped to see earlier in the day.

She had worn black silk, and my last glimpse of her had been as a bride, dressed in white, from head to foot, and we had separated for the night just as the clock struck twelve.

Add to this a late supper, and you make the dream.

But I did not think of doing it until I had been frightened nearly to death.

Of course the first dream was the cause of the two others.

THE less men think the more they talk.

IF you are a frequenter or a resident of a miasmatic district, barricade your system against the scourge of all new countries—ague, bilious and intermittent fevers—by the use of Hop Bitters.

LUDINGTON, MICH., Feb. 2, 1880.

I have sold Hop Bitters for four years and there is no medicine that surpasses them for bilious attacks, kidney complaints, and many other diseases incident to this malarial climate.

O. T. ALEXANDER.

Ethel's Resolve.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

"EVERYBODY is talking about you, George, and I won't stand this treatment any longer.

"We've been married but six months, and for the last three months, with the exception of Sunday, you haven't spent an evening with me,' said Ethel Sage, her pretty face flushed and excited, as she thus addressed her husband.

"Who is everybody, Ethel?" and George looked gravely at his wife.

"There's Miss Bloomsberry for one

"Miss Bloomsberry be hanged," was Mr. Sage's mental comment, but he interrupted his wife with a laugh.

"Well, Ethel, things have come to a pretty pass when you place more confidence in a meddlesome old maid than you do in your husband."

"Oh, I am tired of hearing that talk about confidence. I don't understand you, George, and my patience is all gone."

"Can't you scare up enough to last you for to-night? I promise you this will be my last evening away from home. Now, don't pout those pretty lips, and I will be home early."

"What do you call early George?"

"Let me see—it is nearly seven now. I'll get back by nine. By-bye, love, and don't think me quite so bad as Miss Bloomsberry would have you believe me."

And kissing his wife, George left the house as he had every evening for the last three months.

When Ethel found herself alone, she hid her face on the arm of the sofa, and burst into tears.

And so Miss Bloomsberry found her half an hour later.

"What—crying again? Gracious me, child, what good is your life to you? Your husband is out again, I suppose. I thought he was; that is why I came over."

"He says that this is the last night he shall be away from home," sobbed poor Ethel.

"Umph! And you believe him. Well, well, the man does not breathe that could deceive Primrose Bloomsberry so easily. If you could only be independent, my dear. The more humble you are to a man, the more he will tyrannize. He is one of the lords of creation, indeed. A pretty figure some of them cut as lords."

And Miss Bloomsberry's sharp nose gave a spasmodic turn upward.

"But I cannot be independent with George; he always laughs me out of it."

"The wretch. There, my dear, don't feel hurt; I don't mean to say that George is a wretch, only he acts just like one, sometimes."

"He has promised to return home early to-night; said he would be at home at nine; and, dear Miss Bloomsberry, if he doesn't keep his word with me to-night, I feel I shall do something desperate."

"That's no way to talk, my dear. Never do anything desperate. But if your husband does not keep his word with you to-night—if he isn't home at nine o'clock sharp—you should leave him this very night. Run away from him, my dear; don't let him find you here when he comes back. But I wouldn't advise you to do anything desperate.'

"Run away from my husband! Oh, Miss Bloomsberry, that is the most desperate thing I could think of doing; but really, if George breaks his word with me to-night, I shall feel tempted to take your advice."

"That's right, my dear. Now you are talking with some spirit. I'll take you under my protection; you will be such a help to me, child, in the discharge of my Christian duties. There are so many women situated like you—their husbands away every night enjoying themselves in other women's society—and you'll know so well how to comfort them, love."

Ethel felt a chill creeping over her at these words, and oh, how she prayed that her husband would return by nine o'clock, for Miss Bloomsberry was going to wait, and that lady had her eyes fixed upon the clock, fearing the eventful hour would pass without her knowledge.

Nine o'clock came; George Sage didn't come, and his wife moaned piteously, while Primrose Bloomsberry groaned aloud on the depravity of man.

Half an hour after, Ethel Sage clung to Miss Bloomsberry, as they walked along the street.

She was pale and frightened.

Already she regretted the step she had taken, and wished herself safely home again.

What would George say when he returned and found her gone?

"Stop your shivering, and we'll stop in and see Mrs. Marsh's baby. It's very sick," said Mrs. Bloomsberry, standing before a door.

"Oh, do, dear Miss Bloomsberry. Mrs. Marsh has always been our friend, and I couldn't bear to see her to-night," cried Ethel.

"Nonsense. I promised to call in before I went home—but do try and not look as if you had lost all your friends, dear child."

And before Ethel Sage could utter another word, Miss Bloomsberry rang the bell.

The next minute they were in Mrs. Marsh's parlor.

As Ethel entered, she started back in surprise.

The door of an adjoining room was ajar, and her husband's voice greeted her.

"I promised Ethel to be home at nine o'clock, and here I will be an hour behind time."

"Good gracious, is that your husband's voice, Ethel?" said Miss Bloomsberry, in a whisper.

Ethel nodded her head, and put her finger up to warn her to be silent.

"Well, I suppose you can explain to her how it happened, to-morrow—that is, after the piano comes home. It will be quite a little surprise to Ethel, after all," said the pleasant voice of Mrs. Marsh.

"Yes, it will. When we went to housekeeping my means wouldn't allow me to buy a piano, and when you offered me this three months' night work, it struck me at once the princely price you named for my reward would be just the sum to give Ethel a piano."

"Oh, Miss Bloomsberry. Oh, Mrs. Marsh," cried Ethel, as that lady entered the room.

"Oh, George, George, forgive me. I know what you have been doing these long nights for the last three months; but, indeed, I don't deserve it."

George Sage's hand was on Mr. Marsh's door knob when his wife grasped him by the arm.

"Ethel," cried George, turning back in surprise, "what brings you here—what ails you?"

"Oh, George, forgive me, forgive me, I was running away."

"Running away!" and George looked mystified.

"Yes, George, your wife was running away from you," said Mrs. Marsh, entering the room, laughing. "But you needn't order pistols, for it was with Mrs. Bloomsberry that she was eloping."

Mr. Marsh and Mr. Sage were at their wits' ends until Ethel, amidst her sobs and tears, explained.

Miss Bloomsberry found it convenient to leave the moment Mrs. Marsh entered.

Ethel never doubted her husband again; but Miss Bloomsberry's advice and Ethel's running away have been the cause of much merriment

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ONLY A KISS.—How diversified are the uses of the token of affection—a token of welcoming and departure as well for "when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house."

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, gave Steel, the butcher, a kiss for his vote; and Jane, the Duchess of Gordon, recruited her regiment in a similar manner.

The memory of a kiss which Sydney Smith received in his youth caste him for forty years, and he said, "I believe it will be one of the last things I shall think of when I die."

And Jean Paul Richter, in his "Autobiography," which was written ten years after the occurrence, tells how a single kiss, taken of his sister's lips, turned Richter, as he met a certain three o'clock stage in Schwarzenbach one winter night. "It was the one pearl of a minute," he says, "that was never repeated; a whole longing past and a dreaming future were united in one moment, and in the darkness behind my closed eyes the fireworks of my whole life revolved in a glance. Ah, I have never forgotten it—the ineffaceable moment!

Probably the most remarkable kiss upon record is that which was given by Queen Margaret to Alain Chartier more than four hundred years ago. He was a poet, but the ugliest man in France. During his lifetime he enjoyed a wonderful reputation, but after his death he was neglected and forgotten. He is now chiefly remembered on account of the kiss which the Queen pressed upon his [illegible] one day, and is found to [illegible] "I kissed not the man, I kiss the soul that sings."

Poor Sappho, after being deserted by Phaon thought that life had no more charms, and longed only for "restful death." Therefore, from Leucate, in Acarnania, on the [illegible] which was [illegible] dedicated to Apollo, she threw herself into the sea. But ere she did so she wrote him a [illegible] letter, in which she says, "You stopped my tongue with kisses, and found them sweeter than my song." And many a poor, forsaken heart has echoed the same words in modern days!

APOPHTHEGM I. THE DYSPEPTIC.—Let no man take that which he finds by experience to digest ill, nor be negligent, carelessly damaging between natural tastes and acquired bad habits. One man's meat is another man's poison. Set your loaf before you and eat. Always use [illegible] exercise. Stand or walk [illegible] Live regularly and temperately with a cool [illegible] Over dinner sit awhile, after supper walk a mile. Eat when you are hungry, not when it is meal time. Eat only such a quantity that you shall be hungry when meal time comes round. Let your food be proportionate to your work. Be temperate in all things. Nature loves regularity. Dr. Diet is the best physician.

A healthy body is indispensable to a vigorous mind. A bilious and dyspeptic man, whose blood drags sluggishly in his veins, can neither think clearly nor act wisely. Ayer's Pills will stir up the liver, excite the stomach and bowels to activity, open the pores of the system, renovate the blood, and restore a healthy tenement for the mind.

Our Young Folks.

ABOUT INDIAN CHILDREN

BY PIPKIN.

INDIAN children, it strikes me, from what I have been able to observe of them, do not lead such merry lives as those born in other countries.

Babies in India are not troubled with much clothing; they are not swathed up, for example, as are the German babies, or even as our infants.

They go through a curious and what we would think a very disagreeable process; their little bodies are rubbed all over with oil, and lamp black is put on their eyelids, and below their eyes; there being an idea amongst the women that this is good for their eyesight.

The children have generally a quantity of black hair, but often, especially if it be very hot weather, this is shaved off so as to keep the head cool.

In the case of boys, however, one lock is always left on the top of the head, and the hair is kept together by wax.

With Hindoos this sacred lock, as it is called, is never cut off.

Some parents make a vow not to cut a boy's hair until he is twelve years old and boys are occasionally mistaken for girls, owing to their long plaits of hair.

When the lock is finally shaved off, a great feast is given, presents are made to the Brahmins the child is dressed in new clothes, and a variety of ceremonies are gone through.

Very soon after the birth of a child of well-to-do parents, the astrologer is consulted to cast the child's nativity.

He arrives with his different instruments, his compasses, stellar tables, astrolabe, and scrolls of cabalistic characters, and asks a great many questions.

He then consults, or pretends to, the stars, and unfolds the roll of its destiny, describing the events of its future life.

The parents treasure up this prophetic record, and consults it as often as good or evil happens to their child.

Poor people who cannot afford to go to the expense of an astrologer's visit content themselves with merely entering down the day on which the child is born.

The bestowing of the name is another very ceremonious affair, and generally takes place when the child is about twelve days old.

The names of gods or goddesses are generally chosen, or perhaps that of a flower, but, curiously enough, never the name of either father or mother.

The choice is usually the mother's business, but the father sometimes wishes for another name than that chosen by the other parent, and then the matter is decided by a lamp being placed over each, and the one over which it burns the most steadily and brightly is chosen.

Dresses for the baby are generally provided by the grandmother on either side of the house.

They consist of little jackets (*kurtas*) of net, trimmed with a bright color, scarlet or yellow; little net caps are made to match the *kurtas*, and a warm jacket lined with cotton wool or some warm stuff of brilliant color is provided for the cold weather.

These garments are only kept, however, for best occasions, high days and holidays, and the children, even of better-class natives, are often to be seen with nothing on beyond a string tied round their waists, or, in the case of girls, with their jewels.

Little Indian girls are covered with jewels very soon after they are born.

Quite tiny babies wear silver nose-rings, earrings, bangles, anklets, and necklaces, seeming, poor little mites! quite weighted down with them.

Children are very often stolen away, and sometimes murdered, for the sake of these ornaments.

Mohammedan children generally wear charms tied round their necks and arms, which consist of verses from their sacred book—the Koran—written on strips of paper, and then put into square lockets of silver.

A Hindoo child wears other charms, perhaps a tiger's claw or tooth; sometimes cowries, shells, or coins.

The mothers are not generally willing to say what they put round their children's necks.

As they get a little out of babyhood they have their pets, like our own children.

Pigeons, parrots, and *mainas* (starlings) are very favorite birds in Indian houses, sometimes partridges and tame squirrels may be seen; and dogs also are made pets of, both in Mohammedan and Hindoo families.

Their toys are generally made of baked mud or wood, and gaily colored, the figures of animals mostly.

I brought home some, which the ayah gave my little girl.

The shapes of the animals are very curious—horses of most eccentric form, wild-striped tigers, elephants, and so on.

An English doll to a native child gives the greatest delight.

They incline to those with blue eyes and flaxen hair as the greatest contrast to their own brown little faces, often rendered still more dingy by the curious custom some mothers have of making a black smudge on their children's foreheads to prevent—as they think—wicked spirits taking a fancy to them on account of their good looks.

Kite-flying and swinging are at a certain season of the year among their most favorite amusements; they are also fond of a game at football, and are experts at "cup and ball."

The annual fair, held to celebrate the return of Rama, is the great day for native children.

Their parents, however poor, strive to scrape a few pice together to give their little ones a treat then, and take them, decked out in as much finery as possible, to share in the fun; to swing in the gaily-painted red and gold cars; to have a turn in the merry-go-rounds, drawn, perhaps, by an elephant or a camel gaily trapped; and last, but by no means least, to buy some of the baked earth toys before mentioned, and curious-looking sweetmeats.

School-life commences for boys at about five or six years of age.

They are sent to school, or in some instances have a master at home, who teaches them with two or three neighbors' children, thus making up a class of eight to ten scholars.

They sit generally in the large porch, at one end, and the boys at the other, in a row, bending over their books, and swaying their bodies backwards and forwards as they read.

The characters of the alphabet are not learned as in Europe by being pointed out in a book, and having their names pronounced aloud; but the scholars first write them with their fingers or sticks on the ground in the dust or sand; when more advanced they write on wooden slates called *takhtas*, and with reeds and Indian ink, or, if Hindoos, with chalk.

Indian children are generally very clever in arithmetic, saying their tables up to an extraordinary number; but they cannot endure being severely exercised in them very well.

Ordinary slates are now used for sums; formerly palm-leaves and green plantain leaves were given to the scholars to write on, and a reed, or iron stylus, to write with.

Perhaps you will like to know what Indian children have for food, and when they take their meals.

The hours vary according to the time of year, and the time that the schools are open.

If from six to ten, the children get a piece of cold bread before going out in the morning to school, and return, if Hindoos, to a meal of *dal*, and *chapatis*, the latter being thin cakes made of flour and water, with sometimes a little spice.

If Mohammedans, they are given meat.

Then they get another meal about six in the evening.

Between whiles they eat a good deal of fruit, and are quite as fond of sweets as any English child.

The Mohammedans take their meals together, father and mother and children all sitting around the tablecloth, which, by the way, they spread not on a table but on the floor.

In a Hindoo house, on the contrary, the father and sons have their meals alone, waited upon by the mother and sisters, who afterwards take their food anyhow, and partaking of whatever scraps are left, as they are looked on as quite inferior to the male members of the family.

Some people who know little of India have an idea that the natives are by no means a clean race.

This is quite a mistake, for they wash much more frequently, as a rule, than do people of other nations.

Both Mohammedans and Hindoos wash not only before and after meals, which of course is absolutely necessary, as they eat with their fingers, but also at various other times in the day.

My old bearer, Seethal by name, seemed to be always washing at every leisure moment, when he was not indulging in the peaceful charms of his "hubble bubble," or pipe.

You probably know that in India early marriages are the custom.

Among the Sudras, boys are frequently married at the age of five or six; but the Brahmins delay the celebration of marriage until the boy, by the ceremony of the investiture of the cord—the *paita*, as it is called—has become a member of the sacred caste, that very important ceremony in the life of a Brahmin youth taking place when he is about nine years old.

Often with Brahmins marriage is put off until the age of fifteen or sixteen; but then the wife must not exceed the age of four or five.

The ceremonies connected with the celebration of a marriage are very numerous; the rites occupy a long time, and not only are vast sums expended on such occasions, but much pomp is usually observed in the case of wealthy families.

All married women in India wear on their necks a small ornament of gold called *takly*, which is a sign that they are married; this ornament is removed when they become widows.

The nose-ring or nath, is also put in on marriage, and this is likewise removed if the child-wife become a widow.

These infant marriages are the cause of much misery in India, and an agitation is now going on to enforce a law to put a stop to them, by a restriction as to the age for marriage.

Sept. 14th, 1880.

Hop Bitters Co., Toronto:

I have been sick for the past six years, suffering from dyspepsia and general weakness. I have used three bottles of Hop Bitters, and they have done wonders for me. I am well and able to work, and eat and sleep well. I cannot say too much for Hop Bitters.

SIMON ROBBINS.

TOM AND JESSIE.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

"DON'T forget to call over to-morrow, Anson. Florence Maynard will be here, and you are to be the best of friends, you know," said Jessie Wayne to her lover, as he was about taking leave.

"If your old playmate and I are not very good friends, it won't be my fault, Jessie," said Anson Miller.

When the door closed after her lover, Jessie, with cheeks aglow and eyes sparkling, held up her hands so that the rays of sunlight caught the glitter of the beautiful diamond that gleamed like a spark of fire on the first finger of her left hand.

But not a thought of Anson Miller mingled with the rapturous beating of Jessie's heart, as she gazed in blissful admiration at the magnificent gem he had just placed upon her finger.

Not a thought of her lover, and yet Jessie was very happy, or, at least, she thought she was, and what girl of eighteen, with an immense solitaire sparkling on her finger, a seal of her engagement with a rich man's son, wouldn't think she had reached the acme of all earthly happiness?

"Oh, dear!" cried Jessie, as she caught sight of a tall, handsome young man strolling toward the house, "just when I wanted to feast my eyes on my diamond, that horrid Tom Matthews must come to torment me!"

"Ah, little cousin, so you're watching for me," said the young man whom Jessie called that horrid Tom Mathews, as he entered the room, and making a wry face at his cousin, crossed over to where she stood at the window.

"Watching for you!" and Jessie gave her head a toss that set all her curls dancing. "I was just saying to myself, sir, that you always came when you wasn't wanted. There, if you call that watching for you."

"So that is what you was just saying to yourself, is it?" said Tom, trying to suppress a broad grin. "Don't you know, you dear little angel without wings, that talking to one's self is a very bad habit? There, don't flare up; I intended to be on my best behavior to-day, and I want you to be ditto.

"Really, Jessie, you look too pretty to quarrel.

"Where did you get so much blush from, and how came all that shine in your eyes? Halloo!"—Tom's eyes fell upon the diamond—"jewelry shop on fire round here, eh? Let's have a look at all that paste."

And Tom coolly reached for Jessie's hand, but she drew back indignantly.

"Tom, you are an impertinent fellow. I'm no judge of false jewelry; I never wear any; and I don't think it likely that a gentleman's son would give me a paste ring."

"So it was Anson Miller that gave you the diamond?"

"That's right, Tom, call things by their proper names," said Jessie, laughing.

But the merry light that always twinkled in Tom's blue eyes had faded away, and his smiling countenance was a perfect blank.

Jessie was lost once more in admiration of her solitaire, and, without another word, Tom crossed the room, threw himself upon the sofa, twirled the ends of his moustache, and gazed hard at the ceiling.

Surely something must have happened to disturb that horrid Tom Mathews.

Neither spoke for some minutes.

Jessie continued to gaze at her jewel, Tom to stare at the ceiling.

As if a thought occurred to her suddenly, Jessie crossed over and knelt beside her handsome cousin.

"Why are you so quiet, Tom?"

"One has to be quiet some time, Jessie.

"That's a good doctrine from the lips of Tom. What has come over you—or to use one of your own elegant phrases, what's struck you?"

"Perhaps it was the diamond," and Tom gave a side glance at Jessie.

"Now, Tom, like a dear, good cousin, we won't quarrel any more about that diamond. I came over here to tell you something."

"Spare yourself the trouble, cousin mine. I know what you would say. You are engaged to Anson Miller."

Jessie laughed merrily.

"Good gracious! and not a thought of Anson Miller in my head. Of course I supposed you knew I was engaged to Anson, but I wasn't going to say a word about it, for I know it is a matter of indifference to you. You are such a stoic, Tom, you never get interested in anything. But I do wish you would try and feel some interest in what I have to say to you now."

"Do you, indeed? Well, what is it?"

"Florence Maynard will be here to-morrow."

"Well, what of it?"

"She is very beautiful, Tom."

"And who says she is not?"

"Now, there it is. Nobody says she isn't, but I say she is."

"Well, then she is," said Tom, the provoking smile coming back again to his mirthful face.

"Tom, I wish you would fall in love with Florence. It would be so nice to have her here always."

Tom Mathews opened wide his blue eyes and gave a long whistle.

"Jessie, I'm sorry I can't oblige you, but I'm not inclined for falling in love this week."

"But you must fall in love some time, Tom; and Florence is so sweet."

"But I don't like so much sweetness, Jessie. I would rather have someone to torment me, just like you do, for instance. I think you're cruel, Jessie, to think of getting married. What am I to do for our everyday quarrel?"

"Oh, that can be arranged easily," said Jessie, laughing heartily.

"You fall in love with Florence, and I promise to do all the tormenting. We can quarrel, and kiss, and make up half-a-dozen times a day, just as we do now."

"No, no, Jessie, if we are cousins, Anson Miller wouldn't stand that sort of thing," said Tom, rising to his feet. "There's to be no more quarreling, no more kissing and making up between you and me. The less we see of each other after your marriage, the better."

And Tom sauntered out of the room.

Jessie's heart gave a great bound, and seemed to stop in her throat.

She tried to call her cousin back, but his name died upon her lips.

There was to be no more kissing or quarreling between her and Tom.

With a sob, Jessie hid her face upon the sofa.

How was it she didn't understand her heart before?

Was it possible that she loved that horrid Tom Mathews?

Next day Jessie's old schoolfellow, Florence Maynard, came; but instead of feeling good-humored and happy, Jessie felt cross and miserable, a state of mind her sunny nature couldn't understand.

How could she have gazed with such delight on that diamond ring yesterday, when it filled her heart with loathing every time she caught its sparkle to-day?

If she could only muster courage enough to give that ring back to Anson Miller.

"Poor Anson," thought Jessie. "I wonder if he loves me very much—if he would feel awfully grieved if I gave him back the ring? But what a foolish girl I am! That horrid Tom cares nothing for me. I'll forget him, and keep my troth with Anson."

But this was easier said than done.

When Jessie entered the parlor that evening, she found Tom talking to beautiful Florence Maynard as if he had known her all his life, and Anson Miller sat gazing at Florence, his eyes beaming with admiration.

In all her life, Jessie never passed such a miserable evening.

That night she cried herself ill—so ill that she was obliged to remain in her own room several days.

When she went downstairs again, a great surprise awaited her.

She watched her cousin Tom and Florence Maynard closely.

Jessie's heart beat joyfully, but it beat more joyfully still when she noticed the conduct of her lover.

If ever a man was in love, Anson Miller was in love with Florence Maynard.

"Anson, you love Florence," she said to him one day.

"Oh, Heaven! Jessie, I never meant that you should know that."

"Don't speak like that, Anson. I feel happy—so very happy that you love Florence. Here is your ring, Anson; I would have returned it to you the day you gave it to me, only I thought it would grieve you so. I never loved you—I love another."

And the hot tears rolled down Jessie's cheeks.

"You, Jessie! you love another! Who is it?"

"Don't ask me who it is—but, yes, I'll tell you. Anson, I love that horrid Tom Mathews. And, oh, dear! I'm so angry with myself for loving him; but I cannot help it."

And Jessie, who was herself once more, wiped her tears away with an angry movement.

At this point of the conversation there was a faint noise, as if someone was moving away from the window behind them; but Jessie did not notice it.

She sent Anson away with a light heart in quest of Florence.

"Why, Jessie, what are you doing out here alone—star-gazing, I suppose?" said Tom Mathews, stepping out on the steps, and standing where Anson Miller had stood a few minutes before. "You are looking like a ghost, little cousin. See if I can't tell you something to cheer you up a bit."

Tom's voice was enough to cheer Jessie; her face was all smiles now, as she looked up at him.

"Jessie, I'm interested—in love—head and heels in love with one of the prettiest girls in creation."

"Tom!" cried Jessie, the smiles vanishing, "surely you're not in earnest?"

"Never was more in earnest in my life. You see, little coz, I've taken your advice."

"Tom, it's no use; she's in love with somebody else."

"I'll be hanged if she is," said Tom.

"Yes, she is, Tom," and the tears started to Jessie's eyes. "Florence is in love with Anson Miller."

"And you are shedding tears because Florence loves Anson?"

"No; I'm crying for you, Tom."

"Then cry no more, Jessie, for I'm in love with you, not Florence. After this, I am eternally yours."

"Oh, Tom!" was all Jessie could say, as a scarlet wave spread from brow to chin.

"I don't wonder you're astonished, my dear," said Tom, running his fingers through his auburn locks. "Didn't know that I had tumbled into love myself until I saw that diamond ring."

And Jessie married that horrid Tom Mathews, after all.

THE IMPOSSIBLE.

BY B. R.

Man cannot draw water from an empty well,
Nor trace the stories that gossips tell,
Nor gather the sounds of a pealing bell.

Man never can stop the billow's roar,
Nor chain the winds till they blow no more,
Nor drive true love from a maiden's door.

Man cannot o'ertake a fleeting lie,
Change his wheat to a field of rye,
Nor call back years that have long gone by.

Man cannot a cruel word recall,
Fetter a thought, be it great or small,
Nor honey extract from a drop of gall.

Man never can bribe old Father Time,
Gain the peak that he cannot climb,
Nor trust the hand that hath done a crime.

Man never can backward turn the tide,
Nor count the stars that are scattered wide,
Nor find in a fool a trusty guide.

Man cannot reap fruit from worthless seed,
Rely for strength on a broken reed,
Nor gain a heart he hath caused to bleed.

Man never can hope true peace to win,
Pleasure without and joy within,
Living a thoughtless life of sin.

SAYINGS OF CHILDREN.

At a public meeting in Edinburgh, some time ago, Professor Blackie told his audience the following story:

"A little boy at a Presbytery examination was asked:

"'What is the meaning of regeneration?'

"'Oh, to be born again,' he replied.

"'Quite right, Tommy. You are a very good boy. Would you not like to be born again?'

Tommy hesitated, but on being pressed for an answer said:

"'No.'

"'Why, Tommy?'

"'For fear I might be born a lassie,'" he relied.

This appears to be an excellent illustration of the folly of asking children difficult theological questions before they are old enough to grasp the difference between worldly fact and divine allegory.

We cull the following from one of the French papers:

A little boy was sitting by the bed of his grandmother, who was very ill.

"Ah, my poor child," she said, "I am very bad; I am going to die."

He looked mystified for a few minutes, and then suddenly exclaimed:

"Why will you die? Does God want an *old* angel?"

"Grandpa," said another intelligent little fellow, "who made those great ditches in your forehead?"

"God, my dear."

"What did he make them for?"

"I don't know, Willie. Don't ask silly questions."

Willie was thoughtful for a few moments, and then said:

"I know now! Father can tell how old his cows are by the wrinkles on their horns. Is that what God puts wrinkles on your brow for, grandpa?"

Children frequently put puzzling questions at home to their parents on various subjects, as is evinced by the one which a smart boy, who had been reading the newspaper, put to his father.

"Pa, has the world got a tail?"

"No, my boy; it is quite round," replied his parent.

"Well," persisted young hopeful, "why do the papers say, 'so wags the world,' if it ain't got a tail?"

Of a similar kind was the suggestion of a little girl who, while at a party, had left upon the table half an orange. On passing the house the next morning, she thought of the orange, and feeling like finishing it, she entered and said to the lady:

"Mrs. M——, I left part of an orange here last night, and I have called to see about it. If you can't find it, you needn't trouble yourself to look, as a whole orange will do just as well."

A little girl who had heard that every one was made of dust, was one day standing at the window, and appeared to be very intently watching the eddies of that staple of creation as it was whirled up by the wind. Her mother, observing the attitude, asked her what she was thinking about; and she responded, seriously:

"I thought, mamma, that there was going to be another little girl."

This, however, was not so precocious an answer as that wrung from another little girl who was reproved for playing with the boys, and was told that, being seven years old, she was too big for that now.

"Why, grandma," she replied, "the bigger we grow the better we like 'em."

Some children are often amusing by reason of their conceit, as in the case of the young French gentleman of the mature age of five, who, on being told that the baby wanted to kiss him, said:

"Yes; he takes me for his papa."

Amusing answers also occur when attempts are made to tax a child's memory about things with which it may be imperfectly acquainted. In this category may be reckoned the two following incidents:

"Well, my child," said a father to his little daughter, after she came home from church, "what do you remember of all the preacher said?"

"Nothing," was the timid reply.

"Nothing!" he exclaimed, in a rather severe tone. "Now, remember, the next time you must tell me something of what he says, or I shall punish you."

Next Sunday the child came home with her eyes all wild with excitement.

"I remember something to-day, papa," she cried eagerly.

"I am very glad of it," said her father. "What did he say?"

"He said: 'A collection will now be made.'"

We will close this article by an amusing example of childish scepticism. A little boy about four years of age was saying his prayers at his mother's knee, and when he had finished the Lord's Prayer, she said:

"Now, Willie, ask God to make you a good boy."

The child raised his eyes to his mother's face for a few moments, as if in deep study, and then startled her with the reply:

"It's no use, mamma. He won't do it. I've asked him a heap o' times."

Grains of Gold.

Prejudice is the reason of fools.

Health is the vital principle of bliss.

Faith is a higher faculty than reason.

If we build high, let us begin low and deep.

Discretion of speech is more than eloquence.

The great man is he who does not lose his child's heart.

Indolence is the rust of the mind and the inlet of every vice.

I've heard cunning old stagers say, fools for arguments use wagers.

The weakest spot of every man is where he thinks himself the strongest.

The progress of rivers to the ocean is not so rapid as that of the man to error.

That action is best that procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.

A certain amount of distrust is wholesome, but not so much of others as of ourselves.

Where we may not be able to extirpate an evil, it is still our duty to do what we can to lessen it.

One distinguishing mark of man's steady advancement is the increasing vigor of his warfare against evil.

Slumber not in the tents of your columns. The world is advancing, and you should advance with it.

Age is not all decay; it is the ripening, the swelling of fresh life within, that, withers and bursts the husks.

The bore is usually considered a harmless creature, or of that class of irrational bipeds who hurt only themselves.

He who does not respect confidence, will never find happiness in his path. The belief in virtue vanishes from his heart.

The true grandeur of humanity is in moral elevation, sustained, enlightened, and decorated by the intellect of man.

How many sighs and tears might be averted if kindness of hand, kindness of heart, and kindness of speech were general.

Adversity is sometimes hard upon a man; but for one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity.

We must, if we are wise, make some calculations in our life, and say what we can spend now, and what we shall keep for the future.

The permanency of marriage is indispensable to the security of families; and families are the beams and girders which hold together the State.

A true sense of sin will bring us nearer to Jesus. Once brought nearer to Him, and living a life of faith in Him, we shall bear more fruit to his glory.

Never hold any one by the button, or by the hand, in order to be heard out; for if people are unwilling to hear you, you had better hold your tongue than them.

High things to each mind are the things above it. Let each put forth his hand for those on his own level. It is difficult to think of things as high in the abstract.

Femininities.

Voltaire said: Women teach us respect, civility and dignity.

Mrs. Joyce, of Methuen, Mass., aged 101, reads fine print without glasses.

As the rolling stone gathers no moss, so the roving heart gathers no affection.

A grand-niece of George Washington is said to keep a boarding-house at Washington.

God has placed the genius of women in their hearts—because the works of genius are always works of love.

Miss Helen Terry, the English actress in Irving's company, is reported to have had four husbands, all of whom are living.

Man destroys with horns like a bull, or with paws like a bear; woman, by nibbling like a mouse, or embracing like a serpent.

"No, sir, my daughter can never be yours." "I don't want her to be my daughter," said the young ardent; "I want her to be my wife."

Are American young women mercantile articles, like bales of hay or fat cattle? A directory of "American Heiresses" has been published in London.

Among the western Indians the children are tied fast to a board, and have their heads flattened by means of another board fastened down over their foreheads.

When your friend is married put your good wishes into the shape of an old saying: "One year of joy, another of comfort, and all the rest of content."

"Neuralgia" is the charming name of a charming girl in Florida. Her mother found it on a medicine-bottle, and was completely captivated by its sweetness.

There is a young lady in New York City who makes, it is said, about three hundred and fifty calls nearly every day of her life. She works in a telephone office.

A woman's advice is generally worth having; so, if you are in trouble, tell your mother or your wife, or your sister all about it. And light will flash upon your darkness.

A Boston paper reports that a society has been organized in that city, the members of which have resolved not to give a seat in any public place to a woman who carries a dog.

The bill which has been pending in the Legislature of Washington Territory, granting suffrage to women on an equality with men, has passed both houses and become a law.

A man always looks through his pockets four times before handing his coat to his wife to have a button sewed on, and even then he is filled with fear until the job is completed.

An awkward compliment: Lady (between the dances)—"I remember my first ball as if it were only yesterday!" Her partner—"What a wonderful memory you must have!"

Denver, Col., contains more Chinese women than any other American city outside of California. They appear on the streets clad in wide, loose trousers, gayly bedecked in gaudy colors.

The triumph of woman lies not in the admiration of her lover, but in the respect of her husband, and that can only be gained by a constant cultivation of those qualities which she knows he most values.

One of the most remarkable cases of suicide on record is reported from Venice, Italy—three sisters, the daughters of a wealthy family, having deliberately poisoned themselves because of ill-health and disappointment in love.

"I love your daughter better than I love my life," said he to her obstinate father. "Well," replied the heartless man, "go commit suicide and let her get rid of you. That won't be much of a proof, but it will be satisfactory to me."

In Armenia girls are married at twelve and thirteen. If they are left unmarried at sixteen they are likely to remain old maids; but there is hope for them till the nineteenth birthday. After that they are called "Lor," a weed, or useless plant.

Brides, as a rule, find it a new and rather unpleasant sensation to accept money from their husbands immediately after marriage. But an all-wise Providence provides for such matters, and in the course of time this feeling gradually wears away.

An Indiana boy having run away with a girl aged sixteen, and got married in Michigan, her parents took away her clothes after she got back home again, and she is now obliged to stay in the house, and cannot receive the congratulations of her friends.

A lady in Toronto got to laughing over some amusing incident, and couldn't stop. Finally the doctor was called in, but he couldn't quiet her; and she might have died laughing if a telegram had not arrived just then saying that her husband's mother was coming on a visit.

Mrs. Lydia Carney, of Dresden, Maine, has the flat-iron which 146 years ago her grandmother used to iron the baby clothes of John Hancock, who signed the Declaration of Independence with such a grand flourish. The iron is hollow for the insertion of the live coals with which it is heated.

"Mr. Jones, will you celebrate Thanksgiving this year?" "Well, I hadn't made up my mind yet. Why do you ask?" "Oh, I just thought from the number of yarns you were feeding your credulous little wife with, that you were getting a stuffed goose ready for the occasion."

A Florida paper is working up its circulation in rather a novel way. It offers a premium of fifty cents to every couple that gets married in its vicinity, and for each birth; or, in other words, it will be sent to a newly-married couple or each newly-born child for fifty cents a year, instead of the regular price.

Mrs. Kate Sothern, of Georgia, who, in a frenzy of jealousy, killed Narcisse Cowart some years ago at a dance, was sent to a convict camp kept by a relative, and her husband was permitted to accompany her. She had two children born during her nominal imprisonment, and was pardoned a few days ago.

News Notes.

Nearly 3,000 births occur in London every week.

Hay is fetching $80 a ton in Cook City, Montana.

Texas produces half the cotton raised in the South.

A hen's nest has just been patented in Washington.

There are something like 21,000 public lamps in Paris.

There are nine negroes in the new Virginia Legislature.

The mills of Manchester, Mass., made last year 60,000 miles of cotton.

Not a single arrest of any kind was made in Natchez, Tenn., last month.

There are 5,000 square miles of unbroken pine forest in Southeast Georgia.

Boston's population now includes a child born of pure-blooded Chinese parents.

New York clergymen say that their wedding fees are not as generous as they were.

A gas-light burner has been invented which shuts itself off when it is blown out.

A female cowboy (?) is one of the interesting features in Las Vegas, N. M., society.

Dr. David Ward owns 2,200,000,000 feet of standing pine in Michigan and Wisconsin.

Nym Crinkle says that the stockholders of New York's two opera houses represent $1,000,000,000.

The United States has 16½ doctors to every 10,000 persons. In England the proportion is six to 10,000.

A hospital in which only female physicians will be employed, is to be erected in Calcutta, India.

Rochester, N. Y., has added "pumpkin pie socials," with literary exercises, to her society events.

A Virginia, Nev., residence that cost $80,000, was sold recently, a San Francisco paper says, for $1,800.

"Bee ranches," as California apiaries are called, are fast increasing in the Southern portions of that State.

Beaumont, Quebec, has an athlete said to be 103 years old, and he wants to engage in a wrestling match.

A red headed girl in New Jersey has run away from home because her mother was going to dye her hair black.

Policemen in various cities in Europe receive pay ranging from 40 cents in Constantinople to $1 in Edinburgh.

A Buffalo man has spent $3,000 in boring for water, and hasn't got a drop yet out of his deep hole in the ground.

Vienna, it is said, has become such a lawless city, that only courageous people venture on the streets late at night.

One hundred and ten pounds is the weight of a three-year-old child named Fitz Buchanan, who lives in Greenup, Ky.

Among the postoffices in the country there are 21 Washingtons, 19 Shermans, 15 Sheridans, 13 Grants, and 39 Salems.

It is estimated that 10,000 hunters are killing deer and Buffalo in Montana, along the line of the Northern Pacific Road.

It is estimated that there are 17,000 dentists in this country, and that they use a ton of gold every year for filling teeth.

The policemen's lot is not a happy one in London, where no fewer than 2,331 persons were arrested last year for assaulting officers.

This was a very concise verdict of a coroner's jury in Idaho: "We find that the deceased came to his death by calling Tom Watkins a liar."

West Foxborough, Mass., has had the same postmistress for a quarter of a century, a lady who is still, at the age of 82 years, acting in the position.

The students in a female college in Milwaukee, Wis., are in rebellion because the authorities have forbidden the wearing of either hoops or bangs.

In France they are using ravens instead of carrier pigeons. Of course, ravens are not as swift as pigeons, but they are not as liable to be attacked by birds of prey.

In the neighborhood of Agra, in India, 65 children, from a few months to four years old, are stated to have been carried off by wolves during the past half year.

Texas farmers last year sold $59,000,000 worth of cotton, $35,000,000 worth of cattle, $7,000,000 worth of wool and mutton, and $1,000,000 worth of horses and hides.

WHILE PASTOR OF THE CANTON CHURCH, New Jersey, some years ago, I temporarily lost my voice, and was in consequence unable to preach for nearly a year. Last spring I began to have all the symptoms of losing it again. I labored with great difficulty, fearing each time I preached would be the last. In July I commenced using Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, at the same time rubbing my throat and chest freely with the Liniment. I gargled my throat daily according to the directions given in Dr. Jayne's Almanac, at the same time taking the Expectorant regularly. Feeling very much better, I discontinued the use of the Gargle and the Liniment, but still kept on with the Expectorant. This winter I have been more exposed, and preach oftener than for many years past, and yet my voice seems to be growing stronger, and were it not for the requirements of my calling, I firmly believe a permanent cure would be effected by the Expectorant. At all events, the good it has done, and is doing me, makes me anxious to recommend it to all who are suffering from Throat or Lung Complaints.—Rev. W. Pike, Lakeville, Washington County, N. Y.

FACULTIES OF BIRDS.

IN studying the habits of birds, one cannot but be struck with the fact that, in proportion to their many dangers, experiences, and pleasures, they become warm-hearted, quick-witted, bold or timid, ferocious or cunning, passionate as the falcon or deliberate as the rook, according to the life they have to lead.

And, more than this, we find that they display in many ways a remarkably high degree of intelligence.

The water-hen, for instance—which is found from Siberia to the Cape—has a kind of human facility, as Mr. Ruskin observes, in adapting itself to climate, as well as almost human domesticity of temper, with curious fineness of sagacity and sympathies in taste.

A family of them, much petted by a lady, were constantly adding materials to their nest, and made real havoc in the flower garden; for, though straw and leaves are the chief ingredients, they seem to have an eye for beauty, and the old hen has been seen surrounded with a brilliant wreath of scarlet anemones!

This æsthetic water-hen, with her mate, lived at Cheadle, in Staffordshire, in the rectory moat, for several seasons, always, however, leaving it in the spring. "Being constantly fed, the pair became quite tame, built their nest in a thorn bush, covered with ivy, which had fallen into the water; and when the young were a few days old, the parents brought them up close to the drawing-room window, where they were regularly fed with wheat. And, as the lady of the house paid them the greatest attention, they learned to look upon her as their natural protectress and friend, so much so that one bird in particular, which was much persecuted by the rest, would, when attacked, fly to her for refuge; and whenever she called the whole flock, as tame as barn-door fowls, quitted the water and assembled round, to the number of seventeen. They also made other friends in the dogs belonging to the family, approaching them without fear, hurrying off with great alarm on the appearance of a strange dog." Frank Buckland gives several curious instances of the special habits of some birds in procuring their food. The blackbirds, thrushes, etc., carry snails considerable distances for the purpose of breaking their shells against some rock or stone. Thomas Edward, the Scottish naturalist, describes gulls and ravens flying to a great height with crab or other shellfish, and letting them fall on stones in order to smash the shells; and, if they do not break on the first attempt, he says they pick them up again and carry them up yet higher, repeating the operation again till the shell is broken.

Ravens often resort to this contrivance. Darwin tells of a bird having been repeatedly seen to hop on a poppy-stem, and shake the head with his bill till many seeds were scattered, when it sprang to the ground and ate up the seeds. Some birds are gifted with a sense of observation approaching to something very like reasoning faculties, as the following anecdote proves. At a gentleman's house in Staffordshire, England, the pheasants are fed out of one of those boxes the lid of which rises with the pressure of the pheasant standing on the rail in front of the box. A water-hen, observing this, went and stood upon the rail as soon as the pheasant had quitted it; the weight of the bird being insufficient to raise the lid of the box, so as to enable it to get at the corn, the water-hen kept jumping on the rail to give additional impetus to its weight.

This partially succeeded, but not to the satisfaction of the sagacious bird, which therefore went off; and soon returning with a bird of its own species, the united weight of the two had the desired effect, and the successful pair enjoyed the benefit of their ingenuity.

ICE.—The theory that water in freezing clears itself of noxious germs has been shown by careful trial to be untrue. Contaminated water yields impure ice, no matter how slowly the freezing is accomplished.

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Facetiæ.

Stock-taking—Sheep-stealing.

Epitaph on a cricketer—"Over."

A serious movement on foot—The coming corn.

Why is a marriage no uneven game? Because it's a tie.

When watches are easily stolen—When they are taken off their guard.

By a learned judge—When everybody becomes honest, lawyers will be a new *set* class.

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An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES, *149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.*

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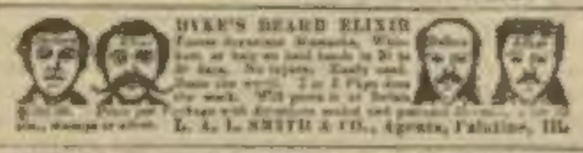

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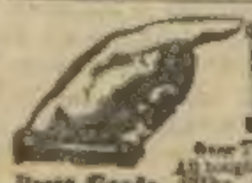

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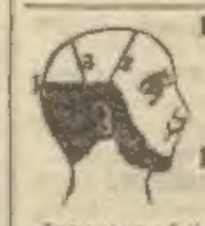

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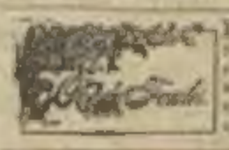

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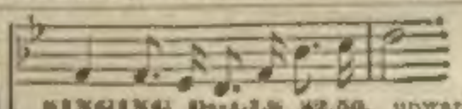

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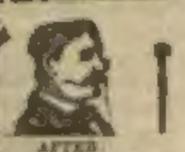
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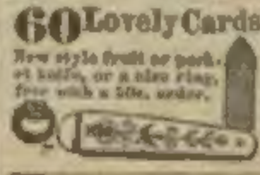

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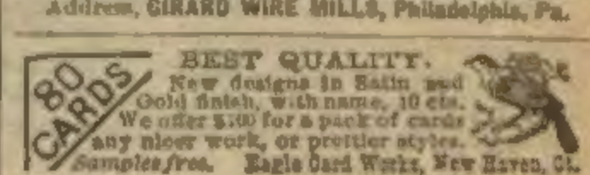

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

DAINTY underclothing is a luxury which every woman of refinement will try to permit herself, even though she may have to retrench in other ways to make both ends of her toilet budget meet. The woman who sacrifices all to glittering war-paint, and is satisfied at home and on undress occasions to look like a sloven, has been moralized upon sufficiently and the baseness of her soul exposed.

Not so much has been said of her sister slattern, who consumes her substance in velvets and satins, laces and brocades, furs and diamonds, and does not in the least mind wearing her stockings out at the heel or patched, or probably not patched, chemises.

Underclothing never exhibited a greater variety, never was a thing of as much importance, as at present.

Indeed, it may be said that the conspicuousness given it is a sign of our advanced civilization.

We may mark the latter stages by the gradual evolution from the barbarian's shirtless condition, through a crude intermediate state, until a hundred years or so ago people never wore night-dresses, for instance, to its present pitch of perfection, which combines lightness and warmth and comfort with the most artistic "raffinement" of feminine coquetry.

Plain underclothing to be bought ready made is so abundant and so cheap that the poorest need not lack decency in this respect nowadays, nor need economical women feel that they must make every stitch of their underclothing, as they formerly did, as everything.

And, on the other hand, she who can afford to follow the latest whims of fashion and has a weakness for pretty "lingerie" can be decked out as never before. In weight and in number of garments the French "elegante's" underclothing has now reached the minimum.

She wears a very much gored chemise at all—a silk vest under the corset being found more convenient—drawers that reach to the knee, and two skirts only, both very scant, and the under one, which is of colored flannel—white flannel is very little used even with evening dress—quite short.

The most charming of these little skirts are of black or colored surah, wadded and quilted, and perfumed with sachet powder.

This powder is chiefly used for the purpose, as it has the scent of violets. If something simpler is wanted a black surah under-petticoat is lined with red or other colored flannel of lightish texture.

The under-petticoat, like the petticoat itself, is made on a very deep yoke if the wearer has large hips.

In any case this is always the best model. The petticoat is, of course, colored too; it has one breadth for the front and another for the back, and a ribbon is run through the top part of the latter some inches below the waist, and draws up what fulness there is into plaits behind.

This skirt is of black or red satin quilted, perfumed also, perhaps, and of plush, wadded and perfumed, and trimmed with some plaitings of lace on the edge.

When more inexpensive they are of dark felt embroidered with a band of plush applique designs in a brighter color, and finished with a couple of plaitings of felt, and blacker colored farmer satin of fine quality, wadded and quilted, and with a little woolen lace on the edge, makes a very serviceable, durable and handsome petticoat.

With such a warm skirt as this it is of course not necessary to wear a wadded under-skirt, too.

A light flannel is sufficient. The colored surah "sets," consisting of night-dress, chemise, drawers and corset-cover, and elaborately trimmed with lace or embroidery, sell at prices which prevent them from being generally worn; but they are exquisite, of course.

They are bought for bridal sets a good deal. The next finest thing in lingerie is batiste, also profusely adorned with lace and embroidery and colored ribbons. But, as the latter, many ladies prefer to dispense with them, and, indeed, would rather do with less trimming in their underclothing altogether, thinking it chaster and more lady-like.

We have already said and repeated that white skirts are now only worn with evening dress.

Also that separate bustles are rather abandoned for whalebones and a little padded cushion in the back of the dress itself, which is thus apt to hang very much better.

To resume, then, as little underclothing is worn as possible (the dress always setting for the better the less there is underneath it), and what there is of it must be as light, as trim, and at the same time as warm as it can be made, and, lastly, underclothing is, almost exclusively, colored; colored corsets, colored flannel petticoats, colored satin petticoats, colored stockings; perhaps, also, in the case of great "elegantes," colored surah night-dresses, chemises and drawers.

The trains of many of the new evening dresses—we will repeat here that they are about a yard and three-quarters in length from the waist—are made separate from the skirt, and fall away from it in straight, heavy folds, without drapery.

Generally they are of a color contrasting with the petticoat underneath and lined with a third color, perhaps, or with that of the front.

These trains are quite narrow. The peaked bodice, almost always "decolletté," matches sometimes the material of the train, sometimes that of the rest of the toilet.

This dowager-like style is chiefly suitable, of course, for married ladies. As the season's fashions settle down into the decided, plainly marked types, it becomes more and more evident that rich embroidered, of jet, of floss, of chenille, intermixed with bugles, and large appliqued plush and velvet flowers outlined with gilt and silver thread or fine cord, are the distinctive signs of the richest, the most beautiful toilets. One exquisite imported ball dress, destined for a New York society leader, is of white satin covered with colored flowers worked in fine wools instead of silks.

The effect is soft, rich and beautiful. All these exquisite trimmings have, of course, to be very artistically treated.

And their price is such that not every one can afford them.

The charming embroidered fronts of black, white or colored tulle which are thrown over satin or ottoman, and upon which flowers seem to have been thrown with a light hand, are masterpieces of daintiness.

Nothing more lovely could be desired for a ball dress.

Lace for entire dresses and for the fronts of evening toilets are being less worn in Paris than they were last year, at which time they were rather thoroughly run into the ground.

But on this side the Atlantic they will show no falling off of popularity this Winter, at least.

Remarkably elegant looking house dresses of velvet trimmed with fur—chinchilla, fox, beaver, seal—are being made by some of the Parisian houses.

The fronts are of some bright color, pink, blue, red, mauve, gold, under bouffant puffs of white lace caught with knots of ribbon to match.

Another model shows this bouffant vest and front made of bright striped gauze shirred on diagonally.

These full, puffy fronts are altogether among the most favorite designs for dressy "negligés," wrappers, tea gowns and house dresses.

The fashion for low-necked bodices may spread and grow as it did twenty or fifteen years ago, till no woman will be "en grande toilette" who does not adopt it. But that will not just now. Sleeveless bodices are a sort of compromise which any woman can strike.

For with the long wrinkled Suede glove, reaching to the elbow, or above it, an arm must be thin indeed which dare not show itself uncovered.

Another compromise is that of the low-necked bodice, finished with a soft mull, or tulle, or lace chemisette which covers the shoulders, softening the effect of bones if there are any to show, and finishing around the throat with a full ruche held by a black velvet. The sleeves match the chemisette, and may be quite full, ending with a frill of lace at the elbow. Speaking of gloves, we may notice that tan color is still fashionable, and exclusively used with dinner dress, dark reception dresses, etc. With light evening dress these gloves are less used than pale cream colored ones. White gloves are used with white toilets, but they must be of undressed kid.

Fireside Chat.

HOLIDAY NOVELTIES.

THE great toy houses commenced the sale of toys for the holidays earlier this year than formerly, and the indications are that the season will be even more prosperous than in 1882, which was a red-letter year for all engaged in the business. As a rule but few toys of last year's make have been carried over to this season, novelties being in demand, without which no dealer could hope to be successful.

"In this trade," said the head of a great importing firm, "each house has its own designers who are always busily employed in planning something new and taking, and the man who hits upon anything that is attractive to the juvenile eye, and which commands a large sale, finds it profitable both for himself and his employers.

"A few years ago the American dealers depended almost exclusively on the foreign market for novelties of almost every description and were compelled to pay dearly for their experience.

"Within the past five years we have not only manufactured better and finer toys than could be found abroad, but we have actually been carrying, figuratively speaking, coals to Newcastle.

"In other words, we are now selling American toys in France, Germany and England—countries which formerly monopolized everything in this line. Only a week ago I shipped ten cases of one of newest and by odds the most novel toy that has been produced in this country this season to England, and have orders for more. I refer to the Mother Goose group. In this toy Mother Goose and a part of her numerous progeny are represented by a number of wooden figures which are placed on springs and which are hidden behind a partition.

"Several knobs attached to each of the several springs under the fingers project from the base of the toy. The amusement is occasioned by throwing a wooden ball at these knobs, which, when struck, cause a figure to spring from its hiding place. Each house and figure is numbered, and counts according to the success of the player in making the figures jump up.

"Another novelty which finds great favor and is in great demand by dealers throughout the country, and which also has been pressed on the European market, is called goblin ten-pins.

"This game introduces the principal of making nine-pins in sections.

"The pins are made to represent policemen, Chinamen, swells, dudes, soldiers and negroes, and are placed on a board. The total length of the figures with their heads on is about six or seven inches, and the heads are more than two inches long.

"The juvenile player, having arranged his board, takes a miniature cannon to a respectable distance, loads it with a rubber ball, pulls the ramrod trigger and discharges the gun.

"If the shot be good and true it will decapitate two or three heads of the pins, and so the score is run up.

"One of the best toys of foreign make this year comes from a Nuremburg house and is christened the Singing Top. It is considerably larger than the ordinary metal or humming top which has been on this market for a year or so back, and when put in motion gives forth accords or chords.

"To set it off, the string is wound solidly about the tube and is then pulled swiftly and firmly. When these tops are placed on a marble table or a glass case, the music is louder and clearer.

"Another novelty of foreign make is the musical beer glass. By an ingenious contrivance arranged on the bottom of the glass, different airs are played while one is enjoying a glass of foaming lager. Glass decanters are arranged in a similar fashion, and by this means melody can be secured at all hours."

All of the toy firms have larger stocks of novelties in the way of toy banks. Among the most noticeable is what is called the "Lion Bank."

In this a large ape sits in the branch of a tree at the foot of which is a lion.

A monkey is seated in the tree at the back of and in close proximity to the ape, whose open palm is extended toward the lion in a chattering attitude. By placing a coin in the open palm of the ape, and touching a spring, the monkey leaps upon the ape's back and knocks the coin from the latter's hand, and the lion opens his mouth to catch the coin and swallows it.

A neat thing that is finding favor among adults is the trick cigar-case. The case is of metal and is not unlike in shape the ordinary cases on sale in tobacco stores. The trick consists in handing the case to your friend and profering a cigar.

He accepts the offer, and when he pulls out the case is startled by the appearance of a jumping jack instead of a cigar.

In the doll line are several new features of French and German make, particularly in wax. Some are arranged with joints and movable heads and eyes, that lisp and sing and make a few steps.

CONVENIENT SCREENS.—In a bed-room occupied by two persons, which is also their dressing-room, a simple movable screen adds much to comfort. It can be placed in front of the washstand, and may be only framed upon an ordinary pine clothes-horse chosen of height to suit. This can be covered with leather-paper, cretonne, or be of plain unbleached sheeting, which is a good color to contrast with a black-varnished screen. The cover may come down over both sides, or simply on one. It may be tacked glued or stitched, and the wood may be shellaced, ebonized or hidden beneath the covering material. A very pretty screen was made of a three-leaved clothes-horse, the wood ebonized and the space filled in with dull red matting. This is quite Indian-like in its effect, and very convenient to screen the bath or dressing arrangements.

Correspondence.

MAUD.—No. We could not in any way arrange it.

JENNIE R.—1. Part and wait by all means. 2. Very good.

MAY.—The color of the lock of hair you sent is a light brown.

CHARLIE.—You can have the preparation put up at any drug store.

W. W.—It would be impossible for us to advise you in the matter. Consult your family physician.

DANKY.—You nervousness arises from weakness, for which you should take tonic medicine. Consult a medical man.

POLL.—Discharge that young man and let him find some one better fitted to his tastes. If he flirts in this way before marriage, what after?

GUS.—1. We think it an excellent chance for a young man, and we advise you to accept the offer. 2. Use your own judgment. 3. Your writing is very good.

GLENBRIER.—A locket, fan, workbox or a pair of errings. 2. Yes, quite tall enough. 3. Lavender water is a pleasant perfume, but consult your own taste.

HETTA.—Ask an explanation. If he refuses to give you one, or offers only a lame apology, refuse to keep company with him. Do not allow him to make a fool of you.

ENDESSA.—You had better call at once upon the young lady's parents and tell them of your engagement, and get them to consent to your marriage with the daughter.

WALWIN.—You appear to value your fellow creatures merely on account of their rank or riches, and in proportion as they minister to the augmenting of your own importance.

PHILLIS.—If you cannot devote so much time to old friends as formerly on account of an increasing circle, take care to prevent them from imagining that you forget past kindnesses.

STUDENT.—Syncopation in music is when the first half of a note begins on the unaccented or weak part of a bar, and the other half is continued and terminates on the accented or strong part.

LANCASTRIAN.—If he goes off in that way, let him go. You will then know the truth, and although it will be bitter for a time, you will get over it after a while, and doubtless have a happier fate in the future than you would.

DUKE.—*Carte blanche* is a French phrase, which means, literally, a blank sheet of paper. Giving a man *carte blanche* means that he has no written directions, but is at liberty to act as he pleases in the matter entrusted to him.

HARRY.—The name Quakers was originally applied by a Derby magistrate to the members of the Society of Friends, because George Fox, the founder, admonished him and those present to quake at the name of the Lord.

CARRWIS.—The first practical application of the steam engine as a locomotive power took place in 1804 on a railroad at Merthyr Tydvil, in South Wales. The engine was constructed by Messrs. Trevithick and Vivian, under a patient obtained by them two years previously.

ANXIOUS.—Disturbances in the head are sometimes the result of some affection of the heart, and the ringing in the ears of which you complain is one of the symptoms of the enlargement of the ventricles of that organ. Should the trouble continue, consult a good physician concerning it.

APOLLO.—Joanna Baillie, the Scotch poetess, was the daughter of a Presbyterian clergyman. Her greatest achievement was undoubtedly "Plays on the Passions," which, though erroneous in conception, are full of noble and impressive poetry, and often characterized by intense dramatic power.

L. K. O.—Vegetarianism has been tried for thousands of years by millions of people, and has failed, the flesh-eating people out-fighting, out-working, and out-thinking the eaters of vegetables only; but between vegetarianism and the flesh-eating habits of well-to-do people in this country, there is a wide distance.

AIDA.—1. In many circles it is not unusual for a lady to ask a gentleman to escort her to entertainments where she is sure the gentleman is either invited or will be welcome. 2. In the country or in towns where young ladies drive themselves a great deal, there is no impropriety in asking intimate friends to accompany them.

CLARA.—In speaking to a lady respecting the gentleman to whom she is married, it is not consistent with the rules of etiquette to say, "Your husband." Politeness requires the substitution of "Mr. ——," and in this respect the mode of inquiry when speaking of a married lady is the same. Neither is it proper to say to an acquaintance, "How is your father or mother?"

LILY.—Consult your mother. A mother is apt to think there is hardly any girl who is quite good enough for her son; and by telling your mother just how you feel you will probably enlist her sympathies in your favor. That being done, she will set to work to find out some plan for helping you out of the difficulty in such a way as to save your father's feelings as much as possible.

READER.—The word palace meant originally a dwelling on the Palatine Hill of Rome. On this hill the first Augustus built his mansion, and his example was followed by Tiberius and Nero. Under the last named Emperor, all private houses on the Palatine Hill had to be pulled down to make room for the "Golden House," called the Palatium, or palace of palaces. This palace continued to be the residence of the Roman Emperors to the time of Alexander Severus.

B. B.—Bathos is a term employed by critics to designate a ludicrous descent from a lofty thought to a mean one, or a sinking below the ordinary level of thought in a ridiculous effort to aspire. It is of the essence of bathos that he who is guilty of it should be unconscious of his fall, and while grovelling on the earth should imagine that he is cleaving the heavens. A good example of bathos is the well-known couplet—

> 'And thou, Dalhousie, the great god of war,
> Lieutenant-General to the Earl of Mar!"